

THE
FREE-MAN'S VADE-MECUM.

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THE
FREE-MAN'S VADE-MECUM;

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An Intended Oration on LIBERTY:

INCLUDING SEVERAL SUBJECTS

WHICH ARE INTIMATELY CONNECTED THEREWITH,

On Matters

Civil, Ecclesiastical, & Military.

WITH A DEDICATION

TO

Every Englishman who loves his Country.

By PHILELEUTHEROS,

A PIONEER IN THE ARMY OF REASON.

The Powers—that be—shall be shaken.

Of all terrestrial Blessings none are more pleasing to
the Populace than Liberty. *Goldsmith.*

It is a rational—as well as enthusiastic—passion which
every independent Englishman feels for Liberty. *Knox.*

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR :

Sold by JORDAN, 166, Fleet-Street; and by
GLENDINNING, 9, Charles-Street, Hatton-Garden,
LONDON.

1798.

DEBATE

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN WHO LIVES
IN OUR COUNTRY



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IT has been acutely observed, that
“ Nothing gives a man a sure title to his own
“ writings but the *stupidity* of them.”

This remark was made previous to the laws now in force for the security of *literary* property. The natural partiality which most men have for their own *mental* offspring, induces the author to believe, that, on the principle above stated, he cannot depend upon having an exclusive right to the *Oration* on LIBERTY; therefore he has availed himself of legal protection, and entered it at STATIONER'S HALL.

In the advertisement which the author issued to solicit subscriptions he stated that the pamphlet would be charged only 1s. 6d. to subscribers. At that time he did not expect that the additional matter, to be introduced in the *Notes*, would have increased the number of pages, to so great a degree as he now finds to be the case; therefore the sum,

ADVERTISEMENT.

at first intended, would not defray the expence of printing, advertizing, &c.—and as the author has *urgent Reasons* to wish for some pecuniary emolument, (which indeed he is fairly entitled to, as the price of his labour *;) he is well-assured that none of his *present* subscribers† will be dissatisfied at the payment of *two shillings*, and hopes that not any Non-subscribing purchasers will consider *half-a-crown* ill-bestowed for it.

* Books, which possess any merit, cannot be composed without some study, and consequently lapse of time; therefore it would be highly unreasonable to expect that such books should be sold for the mere charge of paper and press-work. Men of Literature have certainly as fair a claim to be paid for their labours, as mere Mechanics have; or, in other words: one man may with as much propriety expect a recompence for mental exertion and hope to convert *ideas* into *cash*, through the medium of *a book*, as another may make the public pay him an ample reward for ingenuity in the discovery of a *patent-lamp*, or a well-contrived *shoe-buckle*.

† The subscribers names are withheld in this edition, from motives of delicacy, because, should the public opinion condemn the *ORATION*, probably they would not wish to appear approvers of it. But, should it come under the press a second time, their names shall appear, with others, in a list to be entitled, "*The Real Friends of Real*"

ADVERTISEMENT.

Hoping that *most* of his readers, both subscribers and non-subscribers, will approve his sentiments in general, he here requests them (*at the time of perusal*) *not* to refer to any of the notes (except that in p. 23 and in 168) *until* they have finished the oration.

The reason for this request will be too obvious to require an explanation.



Liberty;" and, odd as it may appear, the Public are here solicited to subscribe for a second impression, before it is certain that the first will be all sold. The reasons for such conduct will be amply stated in the next edition.

Country Booksellers will receive the subscription-money, [*Two Shillings and Six-pence*; for which it will be put in boards] and transmit the names, to Mr. Jordan or Mr. Glendinning, by their LONDON Agent.

Such *non-subscribing* purchasers of this edition as will leave their names to be inserted in the above list, will confer a greater favour upon the author than the mere act of giving 2s. 6d. for his book, because in that case they have *value received*; the other is an act of disinterested kindness, and will be considered as such.

Authors and Orators from whom Ideas have been borrowed, and here introduced; exclusive of Essayists, anonymous Pamphleteers, and the Scriptural Writers.

Addison,	83, 177.	Littleton,	49, 59, 99.
Armstrong,	201.	Milton,	xii.
Blackstone,	{ 48, 92, 123.	Montesquieu,	71, 81, 152.
	{ 138. 146.	Nugent,	206.
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Hutton,	141.	Windham,	152.
Johnson,	59, 69, 118, 200	Yorke,	xiv.
Kennet,	81.	Young,	177.
Knox,	{ xi, xix, 49,	Zimmerman	185.
	{ 67, 132, 179.		

The Purchaser is desired to correct as follows:

Pa.	L.	For	read
xviii	11	exigencies,	exigences.
29	18	imputation,	— imputability.
76	19	is motion,	— is progressive motion,
107	30	wars,	— war.
123	5	eldest,	— elder.
142	14	her martial,	— her <i>phileleutheran</i> martial
156	20	excellencies	— excellences.
161	11	the greater part	— a great part.
197	32	the name,	— even the name.
200	14	tranquility,	— tranquillity.

Literal oversights and errors in punctuation are too trivial to be attended to.

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DEDICATION.

99.
152.

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN WHO LOVES
HIS COUNTRY.

GENTLEMEN!

ai

THERE has been a period, as the annals of literature will testify, when it was an almost invariable practice for authors to dedicate their works to some patron; and seldom are any Dedications to be found without the most fulsome adulation to the splendid virtues, the heroic actions, the extraordinary intellect, or superior accomplishments, of the person whose name was thus brought before the public; so that such compositions might justly have been denominated

“Tissues of glittering falsehood.”

Generally speaking, the present

race of authors may certainly claim a greater share of merit than most of their predecessors could as to propriety of conduct in this respect. They seldom are mean enough thus publicly to act the part of sycophants, and "set genius to sale," by flattering dignified and opulent individuals under the expectation of a premium for such servile homage. We may therefore infer that mankind are, in some degree, *wiser* than they were; and likewise more *witty*, if the Poet's definition of wit be a just one, who says,

" True genuine wit consists in this—to know
" What to *ourselves*, to *others*—what we owe."

At this day, most authors have a greater regard for their own character, and a juster opinion of the good sense of their *fellow-creatures* than to disgrace the one, and disgust the other,

with prostituted praise, and commendation so gross as to give just occasion to question its sincerity.

But however admissible it may be in *some cases* for authors to paint their patrons in pleasing colours, and give to their respective complexions those tints of beauty which they do not really possess, yet, to a body of men so numerous as *you are* to whom these pages are addressed, the language of adulation would be, in the highest degree, absurd; and the recompence I might *justly* expect would be that of derision and contempt.

You will therefore receive the following pages unaccompanied with any previous panegyric on your character for *valour, loyalty*, and the usual concomitant virtues; and though I have no dread of the *fastidious malignant* critic, nor am of such a temper

as to crave any mercy from men of that description, yet the approbation of such of ye as are virtuous, candid, and judicious, (whether learned or unlearned) would afford me some of those delightful sensations which can better be imagined than described.

But was I to expect that the publishing of these *free* sentiments would create me no enemies, my intellect must be completely infatuated by the most ridiculous *vanity*. No! Gentlemen! I am not quite such a literary *coxcomb* as to believe that I can please every body. The principles on which I write will certainly expose me to obloquy and resentment from the dishonest part of mankind. Having long been conversant with the writings of Churchill, I am duly aware of this *experimental* truth, that,

“ The Man whose hardy spirit shall engage

“ To lash the Vices of a guilty Age,

D E D I C A T I O N .

v

“ At his first setting forward, ought to know

“ That every *Rogue* he meets must be his Foe.”

The Conference.

Now a rogue cannot be a patriot: therefore these pages are not dedicated to such men. If however this product of my solitary hours should excite the regard of any one of those who are “ the noblest work of God,” be his rank in life ever so low, I shall *value* his friendship: for I would prefer the cordial esteem of a man clad in the most homely vesture, if characterized for integrity and other good qualities, to all the most flattering caresses of the *most dignified* KNAVE that ever wore a purple Tunic or a glittering Star. The friendship of mere rank has no *positive* value in the esteem of an honest man. It is only *relative*.—But a dedication, Gentlemen, cannot properly admit of a dis-

cussion of principles; therefore no more shall be said about the *relative value* of friendship, and the dedication shall be finished in the following words,

You will not herein be amused with much novelty or *originality of thought*; your astonishment will not be excited by the dazzling coruscations of *genius*, nor will you be provoked to laughter by delicate strokes of facetious *humour*; but you will be presented with many strong and important truths, brought within a small compass;—truths which, sooner or later, (by this mode or some other) *will find their way into the hearts of men (nam magna est veritas et prevalebit)* and produce such glorious effects as will meliorate society; by impressing the several classes of men with a *due* sense of their *respective* importance; by cheering the hearts

of the poor and the despondent, with the prospect of a period when they shall be less wretched than they now are, even in *this life*; by shewing to the *Vain* and *Arrogant* their Folly and Insignificance; and thus—by debasing the spirit of pride, exalting that of humility, and inculcating a proper dignity of sentiment,—restore a proper dignity of countenance, to all that noble race of animals, whose great primogenitor is said to have been “*created* in the image * of God.”

I am Gentlemen,

Your humble Servant.

Dec. 1797.

Phileleutheros.

* Judicious divines have interpreted this passage as “not meaning similitude in the *corporeal* part of Man, (for *that* could not bear any resemblance to a pure and infinite *spirit*) but in the *kind* and *benignant* affections of his nature.”

Admitting this to be as true as it seems probable,

yet, a grand and elevated style of thinking, a train of noble images—suitable to the dignity of freemer.—being ever present in the mind, will necessarily produce a correspondent effect upon the outward visage. And to this cause *principally* may be ascribed the difference of personal beauty which is so generally visible between the higher and lower orders of mankind. The one look mean and abject, because they are familiarized to mean and abject ideas; the other appear all dignity and animation, because they are surrounded with such objects, and employed in such habits, as are calculated to excite lofty and magnanimous sentiments. But this is entering into philosophical refinement farther than is necessary on this occasion.



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As a few unusual words occur in this Publication, and as it will probably be read by persons who have not been classically educated, a Glossary to explain them is not only a desirable but requisite.

P		Signifies
	<i>pode-mecum</i>	— a Pocket Companion.
xiv	<i>pentekontal</i>	— consisting of fifty.
20	<i>imputability</i>	— justly liable to a charge.
75	<i>locupletio</i>	— enriching.
112	<i>phileleutheran</i>	— literary—loving.
133	<i>semannual</i>	— half-yearly.
198	<i>bi-acennial</i>	} — twice 10 (or 20) years.
	or	
	<i>vicennial</i>	
110	<i>reider</i> , a substantive formed from the verb to <i>revile</i>	
1001	— properly spelled; being the contracted superlative of little, less, ledest.	





P R E F A C E.

IT sometimes happens that the subject matter of a book is so self-evident, or so judiciously arranged by the author, that no explanatory preface is at all necessary: however, it more commonly occurs, either from necessity or from choice, that the author does not suffer his composition to go abroad without interposing some sentiments betwixt the Title-page and the work; thus imitating the common rule of nature, who has plac'd a neck betwixt the countenance (or title-page of man) and the trunk or body which contains the vitals.

In the present case it appears requisite that the reader should be prepared by the statement of a few matters previous to entering upon the Oration itself, thereby to enable him to comprehend, with greater facility, the plan and purport of what follows.

The Convention Bill having render'd certain meetings of more than 50 persons illegal, subject to magistratual control, and liable to heavy penalties, the author *intended* to adopt *this* plan, viz: in every considerable town, to issue out an advertisement informing the inhabitants that on *such* a day and hour, and at *such* a place, he intended to address 49 persons with an oration on *political* and *religious* matters, interesting to persons in every rank from the peer to the peasant; and that for this purpose tickets would be issued GRATIS to the limited number: but that no person would be admitted into the room who did not previously apply for a ticket.

This was the plan which the author designed; but, upon making some efforts to accomplish his design, he found himself encompassed with difficulties which at first he did not suspect, viz. the difficulty of procuring a place in which to deliver his address, and also of finding a *sufficient* number of persons to hear his sentiments.

It may be a matter of surprize to some persons to read what has just been asserted; for, they might reasonably suppose, that, when a meeting is not illegal, and at such meeting the human intellect is to be excited, by enquiry into subjects of importance,

tance, and that enquiry urged with the allurements of oratory, it might reasonably be supposed that, on such an occasion, the orator could not meet with any difficulty to find either a place or an audience.

From experiment the author of these sentiments can assert and prove the contrary : and the reason is evident : In the first place the *Innkeepers* are the most likely persons to furnish an orator with a room. The Innkeepers take out licences under the power of magistrates. The magistrates are men holding offices at the pleasure of the crown : therefore the Innkeeper must subject himself to the chance of resentment from the magistrate, if he accommodates an orator with a part of his house to deliver sentiments which may tend to add any weight to the *popular* branch of the Constitution.

Thus we see the complex system of *corrupt* influence. There is wheel within wheel, and all depending on the motion of the central one ; or, “ like the undulations of a pebble thrown into a pool, it begins at a point, and gradually extends its influence over the whole community, throughout all the departments.” But, can that be called the land of *perfect liberty*, where an honest man is in fear of being deprived of a livelihood,

hood, if he does any act which may give offence to such men as are dignified with a *dedimus potestatem* to play the tyrant? He, who will answer this question in the affirmative, must be either a fool or a knave.

In the second place *nominal* freedom is often mistaken for that which is *real*: and thus it is no uncommon case to find men who boast of their liberty, yet living under a constant dread of arbitrary power. England has long been considered the chief seat of liberty! Englishmen pride themselves upon being Freeman! Yet, in this age, the people, who were characterized for courage and intellect, or, (as Milton defines man) "for valour and contemplation", these very men, are of such dastardly pusillanimous spirits, and so little anxious to hear what they never heard before, that they are *afraid* to assemble together to the number of Fifty for such a purpose, lest they should be stigmatized by the Hirelings of Corruption, as being men who are inimical to the *King and Constitution*; notwithstanding that, in their *hearts*, they are friends to the cause of *genuine Liberty*; but, influenced by motives of worldly interest, or from some other Bias, are meanly cautious of avowing their real principles.

For

For these reasons, the author has been induced to commit his sentiments to the press: not as being his principal choice, but as the only mode left for conveying to the Public those truths which he considers worthy of their attention.

He certainly would much rather have trusted his own arguments to his own tongue than to the silent operation of the Printer's art. Not that he at all doubts the *solidity* of his *arguments* being sufficient to stand the closest scrutiny in the closet, but because the defects in *Composition* would have been less discernable in one case than the other, as the graces of *Eloquence* would have thrown a veil over the imperfections of *Style*. If however the language be not as elegant, as copious and redundant, as may be met with in many modern publications, there are few can boast of Diction more chaste and correct: therefore perspicuity and critical accuracy must compensate for the want of those rhetorical ornaments which are the usual product of a fervid Imagination.

Yet the author cannot avoid regretting that the Law has debarred him from freely conveying his thoughts by elocution; as Ideas are commonly impressed with greater efficacy by oral communication

cation than from perusal at the Fire-side, when domestic occurrences often serve to distract the Reader's attention.

A young man of extraordinary political talents, who is a good writer, and a *more* than excellent orator, in a late publication*, asserts, that "the most contemptible mode of informing Mankind is that of addressing *large bodies* of Men by the medium of *speech*"; and in support of his opinion he reasons with some plausibility. The only reply that shall be here given to his error, is, to refer the reader to such arguments as are adduced in the oration relative to the Bill against seditious meetings.

The same young Man, when reasoning on this subject, expresses himself thus,

"The principle which should resolve unwieldy multitudes into small bodies capable of reflection, and subject them, like matter, to arrangement, would be one of the most sage and beneficial of human Institutions." P. 96.

Now there can be no great difficulty in effecting this sage and beneficial Institution. Let there be established, throughout the Kingdom, societies for the express

* Yerke, on the Means of Saving our Country,

express purpose of communicating political knowledge, by reading books on the subject, by Harangues from some of the best orators, and by reasoning with each other in that mild and becoming strain of Moderation which is an almost certain characteristic of men who are in search of truth, and truth only.

Probably many persons may be found who will object to such Institutions, because (say They) it would be introducing debating societies in places that are now happily free from them; a great deal of animosity and Party-spirit would be thereby excited in the kingdom, and much of the pleasure of good Neighbourhood would be destroyed; for "the subject of Politics is in itself contentious, and often tends to sour the milk of human Kindness:" and moreover (say they) if such societies were to become general, it would tend greatly to check the *Industry* of the People, and *National* poverty would ensue; for, the men who are now attentive to their business and useful Members of Society, (in the largest sense of that phrase) would—when admitted members of these wrangling assemblies, these petty conventions where Discord sits in the chair—be spending

‘ing their time over books, and studying how to
 ‘make a fine speech or to reply to an opponent;
 ‘instead of minding how to make a garment, or
 ‘some necessary article of household furniture.’

It may be fairly *conjectured*, that, with this kind of *Banter*, this plausible but unfounded argument, not a few persons of rank and opulence would oppose the establishing of societies for the purpose of rational enquiry into matters of *universal* Concern; because, the more the great bulk of the People are kept in ignorance of their Rights, the better will be the opportunity for *some* of the people to do as they do; and the opposition from these men would be seconded or supported by those who are conscious of their own stupidity; because, as the qualifications to render men respectable members of these societies are more from Nature than from Art and the casualties of Fortune, many of those who are of great consequence in the ordinary affairs of the world, and of no less *Self*-importance, would *there* (should they go there) be reduced to the situation for which Nature designed them, and find themselves far inferior to those on whom they now look down with that haughty disdain which clearly manifests their *fancied* superiority.

But

But whatever opinions the pride of high Rank may suggest, and purse-proud Ignorance may support, let us not decide upon the question before us till we have observed the old law maxim *audi et alteram partem*, and let us hear what reasons common sense can advance to justify and defend those institutions which such men would reprobate and condemn.

Now, they who cannot *reason* with a due composure of Mind are hardly fit for companions in common social meetings; and the wisest plan they could adopt would be to shun *public* converse with Mankind, unless they resolve to put a curb upon their passion, and repress all unbecoming ebullitions of temper.

But when Men have attained such a portion of Self-command that they can submit to the stronger arguments of their mental opponent without manifesting any petulance, and will not harbour any malignant rancour in consequence of rational defeat, then—but not till then—are they *duly* qualified to become Members of the Societies here proposed; which societies are *capable* of great National utility;—for they would serve to cherish the growth of the—otherwise
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perhaps

perhaps latent—seeds of genius, and Men of Talents would thus have a fair cause and opportunity to exert and display their abilities and eloquence. Men would then study to furnish their minds with a knowledge of History and Philosophy, in order to qualify them for the elucidation of an argument: *that* study would necessarily keep them out of Taverns and places of idle Resort; domestic retirement would superinduce an habit of Sobriety; and sober men are *commonly* industrious, in proportion to the exigencies of their rank; therefore these political assemblies, so far from interfering with the proper discharge of those duties incumbent on us in our several stations and occupations, would be one very probable cause of serving as a stimulus to a more than usual degree of diligence and *industry*.

Several other strong reasons may easily be brought forward on this side of the question, but the author trusts that the few Ideas just stated, will be sufficient to counteract the objections of the *superficial* Reasoner.

Then,—under such prudent regulations as would serve to control and restrain the impetuosity of the violent man, and at the same time to
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give Firmness and Resolution to the meek and timid, striving to cultivate that genuine urbanity of manners which is equally distant from the brutal ferocity of *Savages* and the affected refinement of Sycophants and Courtiers,—let such societies rise up in every town from one extremity of the kingdom to the other. “Politics” (to speak in the language of a celebrated Ethical writer) “would then assume a new grace: political conversation instead of being” (as it now too commonly is) “a vague, passionate and declamatory effusion of undigested Ideas, (like the vociferations of Porters in an ale-house) would become a most liberal exercise of the Faculties; and form a mental banquet at which the best and wisest of Mankind might indulge their finer appetites with insatiable avidity.”

Let none of these societies consist of more than 50 persons, by which regulation they will not be within the letter of the Law; and as the world are often better pleased with *things* which carry high-sounding Titles, (though perhaps ignorant of the meaning) let a Grecian appellation be given to such assemblies and call them

PENTEKONTAL SOCIETIES.

Every society may adopt such peculiar rules as are suited to *local* circumstances; at the same time should be under some general, and as it were national, regulations. The society first instituted in LONDON, and having completed the number, should be reckoned No. 1, of the Pentekontals; and every other that may be established should pay such respect to this primary society as to transmit an account thereof to these *Pentekontalists* as soon as the members amount to 50, and be registered accordingly No. 2, 3, 4, &c.

Perhaps it may be said that all this fine scheme is nothing more than a tedious waste of words; that there is nothing *new* in it; having been the plan of the corresponding society in London, Sheffield, &c.

The writer hereof only *supposes* their plan *might* be such: yet, though the great object of their Institution may have been for the purpose of making the people in general duly sensible of their political Rights, it does not appear that they were confined to any particular number; consequently, without limitation, they might become an "unwieldy multitude," and therefore *not* so capable of reflection as when "resolved
into

"into small bodies." But, whatever might be the object and plan of the corresponding societies, the author of these pages is wholly a stranger to. He does not know any one member of them; nor is he acquainted with any of their regulations. He contents himself with having thrown out a *hint*: and if it should appear a good one, it will perhaps be adopted when the minds of the People have been roused from that torpor which, at present, they seem to labour under.

They will then be convinced that the Lips of *Bishops* do not always utter undeniable truths, either in Politics or Theology; but will be firmly persuaded that the "people have *something* more to "do with the laws than obeying them *". They will learn that they possess the Right of *enquiry* into the

* A celebrated Bishop of Rochester, once said, in the House of Lords, that he did not know what right the people had to concern themselves with the Laws, "further than to *obey* them". Such a sentiment may be pleasing to those who have Mitres to dispose of, but must come with a very ill grace from those who have mitres on their

the expediency of such Laws as are framed by their temporary Delegates and permanent Legislators, and, if found oppressive and unjust, that they also possess the Right of *petitioning*, in manly but respectful language, for the peaceable and orderly repeal of them.

With this sentiment the author concludes his preface, requesting his readers to divest themselves, as far as possible, of all *prejudiced* notions, and to reflect with seriousness and impartiality, upon the honest and plain arguments now to be submitted to their consideration.

their heads; because *they* ought on all occasions, to recollect that the Gospel abhors the system of bondage, and that its grand design was, and is, and ever will be, to make men "free indeed." John viii, 36. Now *freemen* certainly are at least entitled to give their *consent* to laws before they are bound to *obedience*; therefore, with all *due* respect to the judgement of this right reverend senator, let it be remembered, that, the people are *not* to be considered altogether as beasts of burthen, obliged to carry whatever loads the legislators may think proper to impose.





GENTLEMEN and LADIES •

IN the exordium or commencement of the discourse now going to be delivered to ye, you will discover some peculiar phrases, which perhaps you will consider as not adapted to the audience, such as alluding to a *multitude* assembled before me, whereas an audience of 49 persons cannot properly be called a multitude.

It is therefore requisite to prepare you for the use of such phrases, by

* The author designed, in his advertisement, to say that 12 tickets out of the 49 should be reserved for women, if they should manifest any wish to hear the oration.

requesting you to *imagine* yourselves multiplied by *ten*, by a *hundred*, or by a *thousand*, and consequently that I am addressing my sentiments to 490, 4,900, or 49,000 persons, in either of which cases there will not be any impropriety in the allusion to a multitude:—and the reason *why* I request you thus to call in aid your own imaginations, is, because it will give a freer scope to my imagination, and my language will not appear to labour under that unpleasing kind of constraint which it would if I spake under the idea of wearing such fetters as the law has imposed upon popular declaimers. The unjust principle of such a law will be adverted to in the course of this oration.

Having stated this, I proceed, by saying

Men,

Men, Brethren, & Fellow-Subjects, HEARKEN!

I. If any man thinks himself qualified to undertake the office of a Public Speaker, and actually puts his opinion into practice, as I now do, one of the first duties incumbent on him, is, to endeavour to impress strongly on the minds of his auditors, a well-grounded conviction of the purity of his motives, and of the rectitude of his intentions and designs.

Now the motives which urge a man to any actions are *primarily* known to himself, and *secondarily* to his fellow-creatures; but this secondary knowledge generally proceeds

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from the voluntary declaration of the Agent himself, and is, in reality, no more than his *ipse dixit* or bare assertion; consequently it is entitled to a less degree of credibility than when there are some concurring or correlative circumstances known by the public previous to his own declaration, and when the circumstances and declaration are in unison, or when the one fairly corresponds to the other, the degree of credibility becomes stronger in his favour, and of course he has a better chance to obtain from the public a kind construction of his sentiments, and a favorable judgment of the benevolent tendency of his designs.

II. In the present instance, I labour under the defect alluded to: for being unknown to most (or all) of ye,

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it is not probable that you should be acquainted with any circumstances which may give sanction to my own testimony respecting the purity of those motives which have induced me to step forth in the character of a public orator : therefore I must strive to supply this defect by a fair, open, and candid argumentation.

Now, the purity of a man's motives may be, in some measure, discovered from the *manner* in which he proceeds to accomplish his purposes.

If, in conjunction with men of vile and abandoned characters, or even with men whose characters stood *fair* in the estimation of the public, if with them he has been laying plots *in private*, and afraid that their projects should be detected, (but, notwithstanding all their vigilance, they

could not escape the common fate attendant upon most conspiracies, *viz.* discovery) then there, is strong reason to *suspect* that their designs were *not good* ones, for it is a leading characteristic of *evil*, that it "shunneth the light"; whereas innocence, or an upright heart, is not afraid to submit all its designs to the investigation of the keenest eye, in the broad face of day, being well assured, that, whatever share of disapprobation may ensue thereupon, no degree of censure can be justly imputed to its integrity, but that the whole blame must lie upon an *error in judgment* :
 III. A failing, to which, I believe, all the sons of mortality are liable on *some* occasions; and this I assert, without any exception whatever, notwithstanding

withstanding the pretensions of the Roman Pontiff to infallibility.

Such a pretension has not, in this age, any *legal* sanction within the British island; consequently, I will not dare to say, that, in the following sentiments, there shall be no errors of the kind just mentioned; but I will venture to assure ye, that, however imperfect these thoughts may appear to men of abler heads and more ample experience, there shall be no just cause for any man to impeach my principles: the errors that be, shall be those of the *head*, not those of the *heart*.

IV. From any imputation of *conspiracy* I boldly assert myself totally free; and challenge any man, either in this place or any other, to *disprove* this assertion.—The very word *conspiracy*

spiracy implies (as all must admit
 who know any thing of language and
 of law) a plotting together betwixt
two or more persons ; and, in a legal
 construction of the term, it must be a
 plotting together for *evil* purposes, in
 some instances which militate against
 the public peace. Now, I have not
 thus conspired with any man respect-
 ing the object I am now upon ; the
 plan is entirely my own, and the exe-
 cution of it rests with myself alone ;
 therefore if I should be subject to
 any penalty by our laws for plan-
 ning and thus executing what I con-
 sider a *virtuous* effort, I here give
 this caution to the man who shall put
 such law in force, that, in all the
 processes necessary to apprehending
 and convicting me, he will avoid
 using the word conspiracy, or any
 expression

expression of similar signification, because Ego (I myself) collected all the materials for the building, and Ego cleared away the soil for that foundation on which the superstructure is intended to be raised.

Having premised thus much, I trust that every person now present will give me full credit for *not* having *any* base sinister motives, as the main-spring of that action in which I am now embarked ; and while I thus anticipate a kind reception from your candour, I am not without hopes that your final judgment, when my oration is completed, will not be less favorable respecting the great object I have in view.

V. But, in order to the proper completion of my speech, it is necessary that I should find, in you my
auditors,

auditors, a disposition to hear it at least *silently* and without interruption, till it is brought to a conclusion.

It is very possible, that, in the course of the harangue, some things may be stated which may prove offensive to some of ye; for it must reasonably be supposed that in a *multitude*, there will always be some persons whose *interests* and *opinions* are almost as opposite as the two poles of the earth; consequently, what will *please* the one will *disgust* the other; and hence it will be almost next to an impossibility for any public orator to give universal satisfaction as to the *matter* of his speech.

I must therefore expect to behold on the countenances of some, a marked disapprobation of my sentiments;

ments ; but it does not strictly follow, consistent with the rules of natural logic, of true politeness, or even of common civility, that, because we disapprove of what a speaker says, we must rudely interrupt him to prevent his saying any thing more ; for, if this were to be the general mode of acting, there would *soon* be a stop put to all attempts at popular harangue : the pulpit, the bar, and the stage, would, in a short time, be destitute of orators, and universal brutality of manners would be a speedy consequence. In all such places, whenever one, two, three, or a few, become troublesome, and *interrupt* the speaker, the majority assume that right which they naturally possess, and by *force*, expel from the company all those who thus violate the principles of good breeding, and

are thus destitute of common decency of behaviour. Should such a circumstance now occur, I have no doubt that *similar* means will be had recourse to for the removal of such a grievance.

VI. But, should the sentiments delivered by a public speaker occasion a *general* disgust among the auditors, it then becomes a point of prudence and politeness on the part of the speaker to desist from any further harangue, and to withhold those truths which the *people* seem *unwilling* to hear. Such shall be *my* rule of conduct; for I have no notion of any man's *forcibly* obtruding his sentiments upon persons who are averse to listen to them. It certainly argues great vanity and self-conceit on the one part, or great stupidity and prejudice on the other; therefore

I shall cautiously avoid subjecting myself to such a charge, and throw the whole odium entirely upon you : I mean, should you manifest an unwillingness to hear the undisguised language of a man who has no other object in view than to promote the cause of humanity, to plead for the oppressed, and to enlighten those who, as yet, know not the truth.

Such conduct is founded upon one of the purest maxims of wisdom ; for it was one of the precepts which the Lord Jesus Christ gave to his Apostles, as an unerring rule for the regulation of their conduct, that
 “ whosoever should not receive them,
 “ nor *hear* their words, —when they
 “ departed from that place, they
 “ should shake off the dust of their
 “ feet, for a testimony against them.”

Mat. x. xiv. Ma. vi. xi. Lu. ix. v. Acts, xiii. li,

VII, All that I request from you, is a *patient* and *attentive* hearing. You have just been told that I do not pretend to infallibility. I am, as every one before me is, a creature subject to error. If any man can prove *wherein* I err, and when my oration is finished, will stand up, boldly as I do, to point it out in public, or will convince me of it in private, I shall really consider myself *obliged*, and will recant, before the public, whatever assertions I have erroneously advanced to them. However, if *no* man should think proper to do so, I do not mean arrogantly to consider such silence as a tacit *proof* that every assertion in this oration is an undeniable truth; because, there are many men of profound judgment and acute penetra-

tion to discover error, who have not sufficient resolution thus *publicly* to avow their opinions; but this you may rely on, that not one position shall be advanced which the speaker *knows*, or *believes*, to be a falsehood; leaving every man to exercise that privilege which the hand of tyranny has never yet been able to wrest from any man, *nor ever will*,—the privilege of *thinking* for yourselves; or of forming your own judgments upon the subject proposed to your consideration, and determining *how far*, and in what respects, you believe it to be consonant with, or dissonant from, the principles of right reason.

There are several subjects which I mean to bring forward to your notice, and offer a few brief remarks upon each of them; but you must

not expect these topics to be spoken of in such a strain of wisdom as no man ever spake or wrote before now. I have no such vanity! but make no doubt that, in every *large audience*, there will always be some persons of such universal knowledge, acquired from books and personal intercourse with mankind, that they cannot derive much, if any, information from a discussion of such topics as will now be discoursed upon: however, on the contrary, every numerous assembly must contain some persons (and those *not a few*) to whom every oration will convey some knowledge, even upon subjects which, to others, are almost as familiar as their own names. The more generally knowledge is diffused through all ranks of society, the greater obstacles are thrown in the way to prevent an orator from ex-

ting the attention of a multitude with novelty of matter, whereon to expatiate for any considerable time.

VIII. This is particularly the case in England, or in the British dominions, the people of which country, taking them in general, are said, *by travellers*, to be the best informed and most enlightened of any people on the face of the globe. Not having myself yet seen any other nation than the British, except through the medium of books, it is not proper for me to controvert such a position, nor indeed do I *wish* it, but feel myself extremely happy in standing forth to address the *most enlightened* people upon earth.

At all events, my own knowledge of the British people is sufficient to authorize me in believing and asserting, that they are naturally " wise

"men", men possessing no small share of *natural* intellect; and therefore well able to discriminate truth from error, when ideas are delivered to them in plain, perspicuous, and pure language.

Such will be the language that I shall endeavour to make use of for the purpose of communicating my thoughts to ye; and the reception which such thoughts meet with from you, and the influence they may have upon your minds, will serve as *no bad* criterion to convince me, whether my own judgment is erroneous, or whether my mental faculty of distinguishing right from wrong has a clear perception of the truth; and if so, I shall be well assured that the oration, taken altogether, is what, in the Apostle's language, might be named

" Sound speech which cannot be
 " condemned". Titus, iv. 8.

IX. The most formidable obstacle, that a popular declaimer has to contend with and to dread, is, lest the people's knowledge should be only *slight* and *superficial*; and consequently render them vain and self-sufficient, so that they would turn off with an arrogant sort of disdain, from a man haranguing upon common topics, on the *self-applauding* supposition that they *already* knew whatever the speaker could say ; and therefore that it would only be considered a waste of time to listen to " a *fellow* exercising his lungs in oratory" without advancing any thing worthy the attention of persons who fancy themselves so extremely wise.

X. Vanity and self-sufficiency are the too common offspring of super-
 D

ficial learning; whereas a modest, docile, and tractable disposition, has often been discovered among those people who are leest emerged from Barbarian ignorance.

Thus the missionaries, who have been sent for the purpose of diffusing the Christian knowledge among the nations of Indians, have reported, that those savage people have, on most occasions, shewn themselves attentive and willing to learn the Christian doctrines, however *unwilling* they have been to admit the reception of them, and to become converts to *that* faith.

Respecting silence and attention, I shall not say another word; because, if you do not think my sentiments worth the small charge of that decency of behaviour, which even Savages do not grudge to give for knowledge,

I have a very easy remedy in my own power, and that is,—to *withhold* them.

I mentioned before that it was my intention to introduce several subjects in the course of this harangue ; but, if I had not availed myself of that deliberation which a *written* speech affords, and had trusted to *extempore* elocution, it seems probable that no small degree of perplexity would have arisen to choose which subject as most proper to be brought forward in the commencement of the oration ; but that perplexity I am now happily free from, and therefore make no hesitation in the discourse, but proceed at once to say, that, As the British Island has long been considered a place peculiarly sacred to freedom, therefore, one might fairly suppose that no subject could

be more congenial to the sentiments and inclinations of *Englishmen*, than a discourse which begins with a definition of, and is continued with remarks upon, their favorite topic—
LIBERTY.

XI. In various countries, and by various men, (even of the *same* country) this term has been defined in such a manner, as to make it capable of very different significations.

I shall not think it necessary to take up your time, or my own, with a statement of all, nor indeed of any of, the various opinions on the subject, which have been given by both poetical and prosaic writers, but will endeavour to comprize, in a few words, my own ideas of liberty.

Liberty, then, will always be found in greatest perfection in those countries where happiness is most gene-

rally diffused, by as equal a participation of the common bounties of nature, as social life can *properly* admit of; where there are the fewest restraints upon the speech and actions; and where the least pecuniary burthens are imposed upon the people,—but, be the sum more or less, that care be taken to frame such wise laws that the national treasures may be prudently and *equitably* disposed of.

Under these three heads may be included whatever is essential to *genuine LIBERTY*.

(1.) In the first respect, or the general diffusion of happiness, I believe *our* country stands unparalleled; and the more strictly the admirable principles of our constitution are attended to, and put in practice, so much the less cause will there be for popular murmurs and discontent;

But it does not necessarily follow, as an invariable consequence, that a wisely framed constitution shall be always wisely executed; and hence, considering the natural tendency of the human mind to ambition, and its desire for dominion over the rest of mankind; considering the bias which avarice gives to most of our actions, and consequently the regard which most men feel for their own interests, even when injurious to that of their fellow-subjects,—it is not to be wondered at, if, in the course of legislation, we find the senators sometimes forgetful of the common rights of their fellow-subjects, and studious to confer unjust privileges upon themselves, upon their lineal descendants, and upon such as are then, or may be in future times, upon a *parity* of rank and fortune.

Several instances might be named, in confirmation of what has now been asserted; but I shall content myself, and hope you will be satisfied, with naming only one, which is obvious to all, and the inconvenience and tyranny of which many persons can attest from their own *experience*: (one of the surest sources of wisdom!) Such laws as have been framed for the preservation of some of the wild part of the animal creation, and for confining the enjoyment of them to a few persons, under the denomination of *GAME*, reflect indelible infamy upon the *governors* and *governed* of this *reputedly* free country; the one, for suffering such glaring monuments of arbitrary power to disgrace our Statute-Books; the other, for tamely and abjectly submitting, for so long a period as three hundred years, to such

a gross infringement of their *natural* rights *. Mr. Blackstone, in the 4th volume of his Commentaries on our Laws, speaking of—that ancient mark of vassalage—the FOREST LAW, now grown obsolete, (in the language of metaphor) says thus,

“ From this *root* has sprung a bastard *flip*, known by the name of
“ the Game-Law, now arrived to,
“ and wantoning in its highest vigour :

* The Game Laws will not exist many years more in their present form. The period is approaching when every vestige of the *Feudal* tyranny must be annihilated in Britain ; and, indeed, in every other country. Yes ! My heart throbs with rapture, under the impulse of that prophetic spirit which assures me, that the day is not far distant, (though it will not be to-morrow, nor the next day) when Reason shall *complete* her triumph over all the barbarous inventions of human policy.

But before *this* glorious event can take place, before we shall bow down, with pure hearts, in *this temple* of the most high God, we must cease from our idolatry, and no longer worship the *golden calves*.

" both founded upon the same *unrea-*
 " *sonable* notions of permanent pro-
 " perty in wild creatures, and both
 " productive of tyranny to the com-
 " mons; but with this difference, that
 " the *forest-laws* established only one
 " mighty hunter through the land;
 " the *game-laws* have raised a little
 " Nimrod in every manor."

And a writer who has, deservedly,
 obtained no small eminence in the
 republic of letters, adverting to this
 subject, makes use of these words,
 " The game laws are confessed, *by*
 " *those who enact them*, to be a disgrace
 " to an enlightened age. At the
 " same time that they infringe on li-
 " berty, they argue a very consider-
 " able degree of barbarism".

The first sentence of this extract
 is confirmed by the voluntary confes-
 sion of a literary *Nobleman*, [Littleton]

in one of whose letters we find the following candid declaration,

“ The business and form, not to say *tyranny*. of preserving *game*, is not to my way of thinking. The laws for this purpose form a very *unconstitutional* monopoly : but that is not all, the peace and society of provincial vicinities are more or less disturbed by jealousies and disputes arising from the game, in every part of the kingdom.”

However, as some persons may consider the restrictions relative to the game, of very little import to the great body of the people, and the superiority of our country over *all* others * for a more ample diffusion of

* That Great Britain stands conspicuous on the list of civilized nations for the superior mildness and more equitable administration of her laws, is a truth too manifest to be disputed : that great room is still left for further approaches towards perfection, it would be the height of folly to deny ; and to point out some instances of imperfection is the main object of the following leaves.

general happiness, being admitted, perhaps some of you may argue (as others have argued before) that this superiority ought to be to us a lesson for perpetual contentment; and that if we are the *happiest* people upon earth, what can we wish for *more*? Instead therefore of murmuring and being dissatisfied, like churlish wretches whom nothing can please, let us learn to give God thanks, not only for all those natural gifts bestowed upon us in such abundance, but for the blessings of that civil liberty which we enjoy; and let us be cautious of admitting any *innovations* in our government under the specious pretence of *reform*: ever keeping in mind the famous *Italian* proverb, "*I was well. I would be better. I took physic, and died.*"

Now that such kind of reasoning is

fallacious, I will endeavour to prove to ye by two or three comparative illustrations of the subject; the inference from which will be obvious at first sight.

Suppose now that every other government upon earth was removed two or three degrees *backward* from that state of perfection which they now possess; and admitting Great Britain to hold the same *relative* superiority that it does *now*, but still defective, in equal proportion, of its present state of improvement; *then* also we should be the *happiest* people upon earth, and consequently, by this mode of reasoning, (if *reasoning* it may be called!) we ought to remain satisfied, and not use any efforts to bring our country even to that degree of perfection which we find it has now actually attained to.

He who runs a race, and *takes the lead* from the starting post, cannot be certain of success at the goal, if he resolves to continue one *certain* pace; because, if those whom^e he leaves behind in the start should use greater exertions, and encrease their velocity, the probable, the almost certain, consequence will be that they will overtake him, and carry off the prize; so that "the first shall be last, and "the last shall be first".

Or, suppose that persons who *reside* in an hospital should labour under some slight symptoms of approaching disease. Are they to consider themselves *well*, and to neglect using the necessary means for the removal of their indisposition, because all the persons who surround them labour under far more grievous maladies? *Relatively* they may be said to be *well*,

and happy would the other patients consider themselves could they be only *as well*; but actually they are diseased, and stand in need of medical assistance.

Now the political health of a country may be fairly illustrated by this analogical reasoning. It may be relatively sound, but actually sick; and, unless timely precautions are adopted, the malady will increase, and probably terminate in dissolution; therefore the Italian proverb, is not applicable to the body politic; because, in its first position, it takes that for a truth which never does exist, *viz.* a *perfect* state of health.

Political and civil perfection is like the moral and religious, — never completely attained to at any one time, but is always progressive and capable of improvement: therefore we should

strive *politically* as well as *morally*, to get the mastery over our *corruptions*; and I will confidently venture to assert, that, in general, the men who stand forth the opponents of political reform, and are averse to the correction of abuses in the state, are under the secret or avowed influence of some *corrupt* political principles.

Neither do political bodies always retain those degrees of improvement to which they have once arrived; but, in various ages, their perfections vary, and a succeeding century may find them in a state of *retro-gradation* considered with respect to the former.

It is with States as with Individuals: there may not only be a *temporary* lapse from virtue, but a complete dereliction of their former principles. The one is a common event, the other happens but seldom; and the

rarity of its occurrence necessarily excites a more universal degree of attention to its origin and consequence ; as an accident, which occasions a sudden privation of life to a man in health, ever becomes a more general topic for the conversation of a day among his surviving fellow-creatures, than when a man is taken off after the gradual approach of old age, or by some lingering disease which equally terminates in death.

In what state of perfection, with respect to civil and political *liberty*, our own country stands—at the conclusion of the 18th century, is an object certainly worth the enquiry of every British subject who has any concern for his own comfort, for the good of his contemporary fellow-citizens in general, and for the happiness of posterity.

(2.) The *second* criterion pointed out to ye, by which the degree of liberty in any country may be ascertained, is, to what extent, *restraints* are imposed on the speech and actions.

Now, one of the leading maxims, which has been invariably adopted by all *tyrannical* governments, under whatever form they have been carried on, (whether despotic, monarchical, or democratic; one leading maxim of tyranny, I say) has been a prohibition and restraint upon the tongue; and the reason is evident,—because it is the most rapid instrument serving as a medium to convey knowledge from man to man; and consequently tyrants and their abettors, must dread the free exercise of that little member which would serve to expose the iniquity of their legislative decrees, and assist ultimately to

the entire overthrow of their usurpation and unjust dominion. But the free privilege of speech betwixt man and his fellow-creatures, is an unalienable right which man possesses, and which no power on earth has a right to take away, nor even to *repress* by any limitations of the *number* of persons to whom an oration is to be addressed. Not that a man should be entitled to the exercise of his tongue with impunity respecting the *tendency* of his speech. He should not be debarred the privilege of saying what he pleases, nor to what number ; but yet he should be *legally* responsible for the *matter* of his speech, since, if he advances any thing tending to faction and the subversion of *good* order, he ought to be considered as an enemy to society, and punished as such.

It should be with the tongue as it is with the press, the liberty of which is essential to the nature of a free state: but the question here arising, is, In *what* this liberty consists, or how far it should be extended? This question shall be answered from Mr. Blackstone.

“ The liberty of the press * consists

* In Dr. Johnson’s Lives of the British Poets, when describing Milton, there are a few striking remarks concerning the liberty of the press; the first sentence of which runs in these words,

“ The danger of such unbounded liberty, and “ the danger of bounding it, have produced a “ problem in the science of government, which “ human understanding seems hitherto unable to “ solve.” Vol. I. p. 148.

And when the Life of the ever-memorable SAVAGE comes under the pen of this profound critic, this acute observer of men and manners, there is the following pertinent observation, “ The liberty of the press is considered a blessing “ when we are inclined to write against others; “ but a calamity when we find ourselves over- “ borne by the multitude of our assailants.”

Lord Lyttleton says, “ While the liberty of “ the press remains (and may it ever remain!) “ the people of England will have a security for “ those privileges which give them a superiority “ over every other nation.”

in laying no *previous* restraints upon publications ; but not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published. Every freeman has an undoubted right to lay what sentiments he pleases before the public ; to forbid this, is to destroy the freedom of the press ; but, if he publishes what is improper, mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequence of his own temerity. To subject the press to the restrictive power of a licenser, (as was formerly done, both *before* and *since* the revolution) is to subject all freedom of sentiment to the prejudices of one man, and thus to make *him* the arbitrary and infallible judge of all controverted points in learning, religion, and government."

These sentiments of this great man respecting the press, are immediately

applicable to the occasion on which I was speaking.

Between an absolute prohibition against the *free* use of the tongue, and a penal responsibility for the *wrong* use of it, there is a very wide *mean*; and, in this distinct intermediate apartment, LIBERTY chooses to take up her abode.

Whenever the freedom of speech is suppressed by legal limitations, you may depend upon it, that there is something going wrong in the government of that country; and probably that there are some evil designs against the liberties of the people: for, whoever is afraid to submit his conduct to investigation, does thereby *tacitly acknowledge*, or at least occasions a strong *presumptive* evidence of, his *guilt*. Now if the measures of a minister and his colleagues are calcu-

lated for the good of their country, and their intentions appear honest, so far as may be discovered from their actions, what need have they to fear a scrutiny of those measures even in the face of the whole kingdom? Most assuredly, none at all! It is the guilty only who *shrink* from investigation! The righteous, that is, the upright and *honest* hearts, are bold as a lion, and, instead of striving, by artifice and force, to evade a minute enquiry into their conduct, are never more happy than when the discharge of their public duties is submitted to the public inspection.

It has been urged, in justification of such lingual restraints as our legislators have thought proper to impose, that "without them it would scarce
"be possible for the functions of
"government to be carried on with

"good effect; because it would be in
 "the power of every artful dema-
 "agogue of turbulent inclinations,
 "and possessed of abilities and elo-
 "quence, to inflame the public mind
 "by seditious harangues, to rouse the
 "populace into tumult and rebellion,
 "and thus impede the proper dis-
 "charge of the legislative and execu-
 "tive duties."

Now, in reply to such a weak de-
 fence of unjust power, let it be
 remembered, that, it is a very ill com-
 pliment (nay! it is a gross insult) to
 the understanding of any people, to
 assert that they would be enlisted
 under the standards of rebellion, by
 inflammatory demagogues, if there
 was an unrestrained permission to
 every man who may choose to under-
 take the office of a popular declaimer.
 What other construction can be put

upon such an insinuation? Does it not virtually, nay directly, imply, that the people are such a herd of fools, that they cannot distinguish right from wrong, subjection from rebellion, their own interest from their own injury? What reception could I reasonably expect from you, if I had the audacity and temerity to assert, that the men I am now addressing are such a set of shallow-minded creatures, so destitute of intellect, and so much at my command, that they cannot discriminate sentiments of treason from the language of sound reason, and that I can lead them into acts of hostile opposition to the government whenever I please? I say, what other treatment could I have any right to expect than to meet with a severe bodily chastisement, and perhaps to be deprived of existence, as the just

victim of popular vengeance, excited by my own rashness and folly? I know not any other constructive sentence, than that now given, which can be passed upon laws restraining the *free* exercise of the tongue. The legislators must either suppose the great bulk of the people to be **FOOLS**, or tacitly acknowledge themselves to be **KNAVES**, whose actions will not bear to be brought to the light, by that *handmaid* of Reason, which God has placed in the mouth to be always ready when her *mistress* stands in need of her assistance*. Now, which of the two is the juster inference, whether the people are almost void of common

* “ Nothing can manifest the upright intentions of a ministry more than admitting a scrutiny into their conduct; it is putting themselves fairly upon their country; and is a sign, that they are conscious of no weakness or corruption in the course of their administration, which may draw upon them the resentments of the people.”

sense, or whether such rulers are not as honest as they ought to be, I refer for a decision to every man's own judgment ; and all that remains to be said, respecting the connection betwixt the free use of the faculty of speech and the complete enjoyment of the inestimable blessing of *liberty*, is— that, as *detection* is a necessary preparatory step towards the *removal* of abuses, on this principle the tongue is the most formidable enemy that corrupt rulers have to contend against ; for, it would be hardly possible for the functions of government to be carried on to any *bad* effect, or to any excessive degree against the welfare of the people, so long as they preserve their unquestionable right of stating freely to each other, either *separately* or *collectively*, the grievances they labour under, and the best means

to be adopted, consistent with peace and good order, for the speedy and effectual removal of them *.

But speech is not the only point wherein our freedom should be unconstrained. In some respects our actions ought to be free from the shackles of control. It would certainly be tedious, and perhaps of very little use, to enumerate every particular case in which this subject would admit to be spoken of. The instances might easily be adduced, but they

* If the sentiment of a learned and good man ought to have any influence on the minds of rational beings, then, I think that submission or opposition to this *Bill* may be considered as a *fair test* of a man's patriotism. Mr. Knox, in one of his *Essays*, says thus,

"Every lover of his country must reject, with disdain, the proposal of silencing the voice of truth, by the menace of authority."

Now the question hence arising, is, whether or not the voice of truth *is* silenced by the menace of authority in *this* country? If it is, let every man refer to his own heart, for an admonition respecting the rule of conduct he ought to observe.

will readily occur to almost every one who will put himself to the trouble of a few minutes' consideration, since daily experience serves to convince us of the restrictive interference of the legislature, in cases where no coercive measures ought to operate; for, as those acts which thus fall under the restraint of law cannot be considered any violation of the rules of moral rectitude, they should be left for regulation to the rules prescribed by *common civility*; by which means a good understanding, or friendly intercourse, would be kept up between the different classes in society: and much of that odium now attached to the arbitrary injudicious distinctions of men would be removed from the world; consequently there would be more liberty, and therefore more general happiness.

(3.) The third criterion of LIBERTY, is the degree of *Taxation* imposed upon the people.

This subject affords so wide a field for reflection and remark, that it is no easy matter to determine where to begin and where to end.

A writer of eminence endeavoured, some years ago, to convince the nation that "taxation" was "no tyranny." Others consider every such impost laid upon the purse as a species of *legalized robbery*; their money being taken from them against their will, under the terrifying medium of *armed men* to enforce payment, should they refuse to comply with and resist the letter of the law; and therefore that it is better to submit to simple robbery than to be robbed and murdered. And another elegant writer has roundly asserted that "every new tax is a step towards a *revolution*."

If this position be a true one, such an event can be at no great distance: for the subject of taxation is practically almost exhausted. We have had so many new taxes succeeding each other, year after year, that there is scarce any opportunity for a new one to be selected; and there is some truth in the observation made by a certain democratic writer (a writer whose bold assertions in politics can only be equalled by his daring blasphemies! however his remark, just alluded to, is this) that "from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is nothing but *taxation*, and even "our candles blaze as burnt offerings."

Having thus given you the opinions of some writers of *our own* country; it could hardly be deemed liberal conduct to omit the very ingenious sentiments of a *foreigner*, in his work

on the Spirit of Laws. Baron Montesquieu says thus, " In moderate governments there is an indemnity for the weight of taxes, which is *liberty*. In despotic countries there is an equivalent for liberty, which is the lightness of the taxes."

I trust there is no man present who would hesitate one moment which of these two situations to prefer for a place of residence,—the land of liberty with heavy taxes,—or, the land of despotism with but few payments of that kind.

But let us here remark what the same writer says, in another page of that justly celebrated work.

" Liberty produces excessive taxes ;
 " but the effect of excessive taxes is to
 " produce slavery in their turn ; and
 " slavery produces a diminution of
 " tribute."

The question which immediately presents itself, is, shall we be wealthy freemen, or indigent slaves? Undoubtedly the state of opulence and freedom is the most desirable: but then it behoves us to take care, lest, by our supineness, we should be reduced from affluence to poverty, from liberty into a state of base and abject servitude. You will observe that Montesquieu says, "the effect of *excessive* taxes is to produce *slavery*." If the reason be asked, *how* it has this effect? The answer is at hand, viz. that "the minister has the power "of the sword when you give him "that of the purse;" consequently, the larger proportion of taxes are collected and thrown into the hands of the executive government, so much the more do we enable it to *purchase* that force which *may* ul-

mately be employed against ourselves, in order to subjugate us in such a manner that we should be *unable* to resist the most oppressive laws which they may think proper to frame, even in defiance of the spirit of our constitution*.

That our taxation is become enormous, (unprecedented in the annals

* Lord Bolingbroke, in his *Dissertation on parties*, writes to this effect: "As we have annually increased our *funds* and *taxes*, we have annually increased the power of the crown"; p. 223. Now admitting this position to be a truism, in every age; *query*, how much farther, in this respect, can the regal power be extended? Is it not arrived to almost its *ne plus ultra*? The same noble writer, a few pages subsequent to this extract, makes use of these *remarkable* words, "A wicked Administration may propose to *impose* the people; in order to render them *submissive* and *abject*, and to *beggar* them out of their *sturdiness*." P. 229.

I hope the British people will take care that no administration shall beggar them out of their *sturdiness*. From the late conduct of the present administration I think they seem to be aiming at this object. But let them take care what they are about! Let them not rely too much on the *tame-ness* of the people! Let them remember that the most quiet *massif*, is commonly the fiercest, when provoked.

this country, and without parallel in any other) most men of honest principles will readily admit. There are however certain degrees of taxation beyond which our liberties, and political existence *as freemen*, would be greatly endangered. Whether or not we are yet arrived to that critical point, it essentially concerns us to look to; if we are *not*, to use timely and wise precautions to prevent it; if we *are*, to use the best means in our power to extricate ourselves from a state of so much danger. Having acquainted ourselves with the *great* necessary wants of the state, (without entering into all the *minutiae* of *senatorial* enquiry) and having learnt what sum is annually collected to defray its expences, the next enquiry should be into the mode of its application; and wherever we find any

large payments made to men whose offices are rather calculated for the aggrandizement and locupletion of a few than for the good of community, we may rest assured that such application of the public treasure is unjust and iniquitous in principle, as being a perverted use of the very end and design of taxation; for it must be evident, at first view, that the people never would *voluntarily* consent to impoverish themselves, merely to fill the coffers of a few favorites at court, that they may riot in all the unnecessary enjoyments which luxury can devise. The grand purpose of taxation, is, thereby to procure the means of augmenting the public happiness; consequently such distributions of the national wealth as have not this tendency ought to be greatly diminished, or wholly retrenched,

and the sum saved be added to the general stock in order to lessen the general burthens of the people*.

Mr. Pitt's remark, in the House of House of Commons sometime ago, was perfectly reasonable, viz. that "men should have a just remuneration for the services rendered to their country by their labours;"—but then it is equally a maxim of justice

* They who have made any researches into the extent of human intellect, must be well convinced, that, on almost every subject, the inventive faculty can find plausible reasons, both *pro* and *con*. Some men have attempted to justify taxation as "a perpetual stimulus to *industry*." Now, this it does much on the same principle as the Ass works in the wheel, he must move, but he never gets forward: there is motion without progression. So men must toil year after year to find money; but it is taken from them in taxes: They derive no profit from their labour. In short, this will ever be a most contemptible argument, until it can be proved that taxation operates only on the slothful and indolent: but as the most active and industrious are at least equal sufferers from it, it therefore may become a grievous system of oppression, for ("*non opus est calearibus currenti*"). "free horses should not be spurred." Men of acute understanding may imagine that their abilities will enable them to silence every objection that may be made to

that where there are *no services* there can be *no claim* to any remuneration. If this rule had, on all occasions, been strictly attended to, it must be evident that *many* of the *great*, and their relatives or intimates, would not have had an opportunity to drain their fellow-subjects of so much treasure as they have hitherto received, in *Places* and *Pensions*. In my opinion, a more disgraceful circumstance cannot hap-

their own notions in politics! Let them, if they please, thus “ imagine a vain thing : ” wit cannot long support itself against truth. A grinding system of taxation cannot be rendered lighter by ingenious arguments : and most men will admit that one of the *greatest* curses a nation can labour under is that of having an administration whose *expenditures* are enormously profuse ; for it has been wisely remarked, that, “ the misery of man does not proceed from any single crush of overwhelming evil, but from *small vexations continually repeated*. ” On this extract every reader shall be left to make his own comment : and the note shall be summed up with the following interesting query,

May not *all* the ends of government, (on the true principles of the BRITISH Constitution) be obtained—under proper management—at much less *expense* than the price now paid for them ?

pen than to behold men of elevated rank, and large patrimonial property, receiving their thousand or thousands *per annum*, as the reward of their respective employments; more particularly so, when the offices they hold, and are *so largely* paid for, are, in fact, no other than *nominal*; (*payment* excepted; but) rendering no service whatever to their country, and little or none to the persons who nominate them to fill such useless offices.

For a proof of what has now been adverted to, you are referred to the civil list, and the account of the State Pensioners *.

* If the editors of some newspapers which have an extensive circulation, would annually appropriate a column or two for the purpose of giving a correct list of such noblemen, and others of large property, who enjoy salaries and pensions, annexing the several sums of their respective offices, it would furnish the public with more substantial and useful knowledge than if their whole paper was to be filled with a three hours speech from any of our most celebrated parliamentary

With what sort of effrontery, or rather of hypocrisy, must such men dare to speak of *patriotism*; who, possessing such immense paternal estates that they can almost rival *Cræsus* himself for opulence, yet, when their country is engaged in an expensive war*, threatened with imminent danger from exhausted coffers, from enemies

orators. The *Court Calendar* is not in every body's hands; nor can we from thence discover, at one view, what remuneration, a man receives from the public purse.

[Since the above note was written, the subject of salaries has been ably brought forward in the House of Commons by MR. TIERNEY; but the proposed list would not occupy half the space allotted to that debate, and the public would be enabled to make so forcible a comment upon it, as not to stand in need of Senatorian eloquence. They would then discover the current price of loyalty: and when they read Lord *such a one's* or Mr. Secretary *so and so's* speech, "flaming with red-hot zeal" for our glorious constitution &c. &c. they would learn to appreciate its real value, and to say immediately how far its degree of gratitude is equal to the sum paid for it.]

* A war in which all the *interests* of the GREAT were much more concerned than those of the inferior orders of men, and consequently the burthen of the war should have been principally sustained

abroad, and discontented subjects at home, justly murmuring at the burthen of *taxes*, instead of attempting to avert the danger, and subdue those murmurs, by relinquishing for a time, part, or all, of the emoluments of office, meanly and avariciously continue to take from their country, in unmerited pensions, or *useless* places, *treble*, or perhaps, *ten*, times the sum that they pay to it in the way of taxation for *all* their property.

From such conduct one must judge that the great object of such men in aspiring after stations of eminence, is not so much for the sake of the honour of such stations, as for the sake of those lucrative emoluments which

by them. Though every *good* man's interest was concerned in repelling *French* principles of democracy; therefore, if the expences of supporting the war had been fairly *proportioned*, none but the *bad* could have murmured at contributing their share.

are too commonly connected there-
with: hence it may be fairly asked,
Are the posts of honour so little deserv-
ing of regard, that even men of for-
tune and high birth must be paid such
ample salaries for holding them?

Oh! it grieves me to think that the
sons of *Old England* are of more de-
generate and baser principles than the
sons of *Old Rome*! for they, even at
a period when their virtue was on the
decline, they, disdained such conduct.
At least we are so informed by Mon-
tesquieu, who, speaking of the *Nobility*
and *taxation*, says thus, "The nobility
"should not engross the produce of
"the taxes to themselves under pre-
"tence of rewards for their respective
"employments. While *ROME* in-
"clined towards aristocracy, the
"Magistrates never received any
"emoluments from their office: but,

" on the contrary, far from sharing
 " amongst themselves the revenues of
 " the state, the taxes frequently fell
 " upon *them alone* : and they bestowed
 " freely on the people, all the wealth
 " which fortune flung in their way, that
 " they might not envy them their
 " honours." B: v. ch: viii. p. 54.

And Kennet, in his book on the
 Antiquities of Rome, speaking of the
 civil government, says, that " When
 " the State grew rich and great, it
 " was thought a dishonourable thing
 " for the better sort to take any mo-
 " ney from their inferiors." P: 97.

O! ENGLAND! ENGLAND! where
 is *thy* virtue? Where is it, when
 Dukes, Marquises, Earls, and Lords,
 think it no dishonour to draw annu-
 ally some thousands from their coun-
 try's purse, merely for filling such
 hazardous, laborious, and honourable

stations, as Colonels of Militia, Lords of the King's bed-chamber, and Master of the Royal dog-kennel! *

"O liberty! O virtue! O my country!"

Addison's Cato.

XII. But I am unwilling to pursue to disgusting a topic any farther;

* The following lines, taken from the admirable tract of the Noble Writer quoted a few pages back, contain a very important query, such that every friend to liberty must admire, but which the minions of corruption will condemn; says he,

"The crown is the source of honours, and hath the disposal of public employments. This, no man disputes, nor would any man, I believe, go about to alter. But will it follow that the constitutional independency of the king would be lost—because the House of Commons give the supplies—if He had not the power of giving back part of this money, in places and pensions to the members of that house?" P: 151. The respondent idea, produced by this question, is the following,

The liberties of Englishmen will never be completely secure from all danger of invasion, nor the system of taxation cease to be felt as a grievous burthen, till there shall be a law made prohibiting all members of parliament (particularly the House of Commons) from holding any places or offices which are not necessarily and indispensably connected with the discharge of their senatorial duties.

and proceed, from considering the corrupt application of the national treasure in the civil department of state, to offer a few remarks on the *glaring* abuses in bestowing that part of the national wealth which is collected under the name of *Ecclesiastical* revenues.

On *this* subject, I do not think there will be *many*, who will differ in sentiment, *except* those whose interest is immediately connected with, and affected by, the tendency of my remarks! The first thing to come under our animadversion, is, what issues from almost every man's mouth, who ever opens his lips on the subject of Ecclesiastical reform, and that is, the *shameful* disproportion in the allotment of the Church revenues: a disproportion founded on no principles of reason; productive of no good whatever to

the cause of religion, but manifestly the source of *much* evil; cherishing a spirit of pride amongst the more wealthy part of the clergy; no small cause of the origin and increase of *sectarism*; and giving too much occasion to the adversary to revile and condemn an *established* Church, whose discipline is so corrupt, and so much calculated to encourage rather than suppress, two of the most malignant passions to which the human heart is liable, viz. avarice and inordinate ambition.

It is needless to say much on a subject which every man reprobates, or at least which no one can justify. Scarce any publication appears on Ecclesiastical concerns, but this topic is mentioned as one of the most prominent evils, and pregnant with most mischief. In the first place it serves

as an inducement for men of ambitious minds, with *interested* or great *connections*, but *perhaps* possessing little abilities and still less virtue, it serves I say, as a stimulus to such men, to assume the habit of those who are called to be labourers in Christ's vineyard : or, if a man's own inclinations do not lead him to take to the ministerial office, nevertheless *parental* authority shall control the natural bias of his mind, and he must *really* and *ex animo* say * *nolo episcopari*, and yet be obliged to undertake all those

* When a person is nominated to fill a vacant See, it is a customary *formality* that he should say *Nolo Episcopari*, I do not wish, or am unwilling, to be made a Bishop : whereas perhaps it was the great object he had been aspiring after, all his life : and his real wish is now about its completion ; yet, *for form's sake*, he must enter upon this sacred office with (I will not say a *lie* in his mouth, because it is a coarse *ill-natured* word ; but with—) such an assertion as there is strong reason to question its veracity. This is not the only instance which might be adduced of “ *solemn trifling* ” in ecclesiastical matters. Nay ! perhaps,

weighty duties belonging to the episcopal function. Understand me aright! I do not say that parental authority operates at the very *instant* of a man's being made a *Bishop*: because, in the ordinary course of things, a man seldom attains that honour till he has *himself* arrived to a time of life when we may reasonably suppose that the earthly *authors* of his existence have ceased to live, in the veil of flesh: but I mean that parental authority destined him originally to assume the habit of that order which is a necessary and indispensable condition for every man to

if we examine the inductions to livings, we shall be shocked with some flagrant proofs of wilful and corrupt *perjury*, in those very men who *should* teach others to reverence an *oath*: and such guilt incurred in those very places where—if one place can be *more* sacred than another—the mind ought to be impressed with the most awful veneration of that adorable Being whose throne is established in righteousness and true holiness, and who is a discernor of the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

comply with, before he can arrive to the possession of a mitre*. The parent well knew that his connections with the great men of the nation would, in all probability, lead him ultimately to that preferment, and therefore he resolved to have him educated for the church.

The natural *qualifications* and the *choice* of the son, perhaps were not at all an object of consideration with the parent. A bishopric presented itself to *his* imagination, and, even in the cradle, the son, is, by parental vision, appointed the bishop thereof.

But, is it not a very absurd and disgusting idea, to reflect, that we may behold Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, and other ecclesiastical Dignitaries, in

* I believe that the Bishop of Osnaburgh is an exception to this assertion; but of this I do not speak decisively. Have searched several books, but cannot find any account of the Title.

swaddling clothes? Not, like the child Jesus in *swaddling* clothes, lying in *mangers*, but in highly ornamented beds and cradles; and, from that period almost to their dissolution, educated in and pursuing with unremitting ardor, all the “*pomps and vanities* of this wicked world”; yet in open violation of their baptismal promise to *renounce* such things, and but little mindful of his declaration, who said “*my kingdom is not of this world.*”

Such however is the practice of these godly men, and it is rendered current by giving it the name of RELIGION

word, which, in it's strict meaning*, comprises what is most desirable in human life, and signifying a *bond of union*, from the Latin word *religo*, to bind; and therefore religion is that

* A judicious writer has defined religion to be “the highest and most exalted REASON.”

principle which binds men together in *the purest* sentiments of friendship and brotherly love. But the term itself is liable to be abused, (as most *good* things are) and is often prostituted to the vilest purposes.

Some perhaps may consider it as of great importance to religion, that there should be such men as *Doctors of Divinity*; and other high-sounding names connected with Theology. So it would, if all who take such degrees were deserving of the title, and were really such men as their title imports, *viz. learned* in divinity, and *able to teach* others the way of salvation. But are they all such? I fear the answer must be a negative one. Elated with perhaps their *human learning*, or at least with their human titles, they seem to forget the essential duties of the pastor, and rather exult

in the rank of *Doctor*; (or whatever degree of academical honour they have attained to!) for, instead of being meek and lowly in heart, like that divine pattern whom they ought to follow, they are, in too many instances, eminently conspicuous for the directly opposite qualities; and if irascibility, and impetuosity of temper increasing with increasing years, if pride, avarice, and meanness, are any sure criterions by which to judge of a man's faith and religious principles, then, every diocese in the kingdom will furnish us with examples enow, (the more is the pity!) to confirm the truth of that *severe* remark made by our satirical poet, Churchill, that

"The villain lurks beneath the *cassock'd* beau."

The great extent of church-pa-

tronage in the hands of laymen and private persons, is a sore grievance in the religious concerns of this country. But, grievous as it is, I fear there are some almost insuperable obstacles to the complete removal of it: however, it certainly is possible—and indeed it may be accomplished without any great difficulty—to put lay-patronage under some wholesome restrictions.

One of the evils resulting from private patronage in ecclesiastical concerns, is, that the livings are too often disposed of in such a manner as to reflect no small infamy upon both presentor and presentee. Our immortal Mr. Blackstone observes that “divers acts of parliament have been made to restrain *simoniacal* presentations to benefices, by means of civil *forfeitures*; which the modern pre-

"vailing usage, with regard to spiritual preferments, calls aloud to be put in execution." Indeed these laws ought to be strictly enforced; for church-matters are now arrived to a most *shameful* degree of profligacy. The House of God is again become a house of merchandise. The sale of advowsons and presentations is no longer modestly transacted in private, but is carried on as publicly as any branch of legal traffic; and our newspapers are constantly holding out advertisements on the subject. I am well convinced that *such* kind of traffic has an *evil* influence upon the public mind, with respect to religion itself, and therefore (under the high sanction just quoted to ye) boldly declare that some vigorous exertions ought to be made to expel these "buyers and sellers from

"the temple." A scourge made of *small* cords will not be sufficient to drive them out in these days; nor even a scourge made of *words*, or otherwise they had been driven out long ago, in consequence of some well-written pamphlets on the subject. The only arm that can be strong enough to cleanse the temple of this filth, would be that of some person appointed by the LAW for this express purpose; and the *people in general* must super-intend him, to see that he be never idle till he has accomplished his work.

In many cases, no doubt, private Lay-Patrons dispose of their benefices upon as conscientious principles as any other men would; and therefore, whenever any vacancies happen within their own power of presentation, *proper* persons are selected and appointed to fill them. But in too

many instances, it is far otherwise, even where no simoniacal sale and purchase takes place.

Let us look at many of those who are chaplains to our nobility, and if we make a comparative estimate of their virtues and their preferments, we shall find little relative proportion.

In the first place let us suppose they were the *tutors* of the nobility at college; instructed them in the ancient language of *Rome* and *Athens*; and probably accompanied them in their *travels*, to acquire a practical knowledge of those places and customs of which they had *together* formed some ideas, from the perusal of books. So far, all very well! But when we come to examine their *virtues*, (for moral virtues and scholastic attainments are two very different things; since the ex-

istence of great knowledge and great depravity has too often been exemplified in the same person! I say when we come to take an estimate of their virtues) shall we find them men of exemplary piety, and anxious to promote the knowledge of Christ crucified; teaching to their flocks—both by *precept* and *example*—that pure system of morality which the Christian code of laws prescribes, and enjoins upon all its followers? Oh! I fear the result of such enquiry will be greatly against them; and that, instead of being eminent for pious conduct and pastoral labours, they will be much more celebrated for being *bon-vivants*, or what the world are pleased to denominate “*good-humoured fellows*, who take their glass freely;” who, in order to gain esteem as *con-vivial* companions, are ever ready to

join in a catch, or sing their song alone; and perhaps accompany it upon some musical instrument; who tell their smutty tales, and laugh at the obscene jests of their patrons*; and, in short, being not very nice or scrupulous in their own conduct, do not trouble themselves about the bad conduct of others; but, if they can enjoy the good things of this world in ease and abundance, and meet with a tolerable share of respect, are willing to connive at its wickedness, and not disturb the vicious part of mankind by reproving their faults, nor by living

* If any of those who read these pages should know some such clergymen as have just been delineated, it is not improbable that they will imagine I had them in my eye at the time I wrote. Such an idea is ill-founded, for no living character sat for the picture. Probably indeed an original may be found, in many instances, in real life; but the painting is imaginary: there is no personality in any part of these observations relating to the clergy, further than according to the Latin adage *qui caput, sicut facit*; or, if the cap fits—wear it.

in such a manner as to be themselves *examples* of righteousness.

However these are the men who are most successful in obtaining church-preferment. I will hardly suppose so dishonourably of our *nobility*, as to think they could be so base in principle, and so destitute of every sentiment of moral goodness, as to confer benefices upon men, who, in the days of their youth, had been their companions in profligacy, and served, on some occasions, as *panders* to their vicious passions. This I can hardly give credit to, though I have both heard and seen it asserted for a fact: but I have no doubt that such clergymen, as were before alluded to, may principally ascribe their good fortune in the world to their own *time-serving* principles; that they adopted many *mean* artifices to ingratiate

themselves into the affections of their pupils, and from them received promises of the first livings that might fall to their disposal, or that they could procure for them through interest with the Lord Chancellor.

Now, of all the church patronage which is vested in Individuals, we must suppose none can be so proper as that which is confided to *Bishops*: because it must reasonably be supposed that they are the best judges of such persons as are most likely to be useful incumbents.

But as the bishops themselves are not better men than the *Apostles* were*, (and they, by their own confession,

* There is sufficient reason to believe that the Bench of Bishops is, at all times, furnished with some such men as the late Lord Littleton's *Episcopal Vexle*—the carnal brothers of *Noblemen*, but having little spiritual relationship to *Christ*; and perhaps (as his Nephew says of him) “can deliver a much better discourse on the *outside* of a pulpit concerning its *antique* ornaments; than they ever did on the *inside*.”

were subject to the like passions and infirmities as other men) and as the bishops cannot, on all occasions, overcome the bias of natural weakness, we may therefore, not unfrequently, behold men *of by no means eminent talents*, promoted to *eminent stations* in the church, under their immediate patronage.

Perhaps some family alliance, or some degree of consanguinity, has entwined itself round the seat of their affections, and then, when a valuable benefice (or some ecclesiastical office worth acceptance) becomes vacant, his Right Reverend Lordship's *favorite*, although perhaps a very young man, and unencumbered with a family, is preferred before men who have laboured many years with pious diligence in their professional duties without having ever attained to any

preferment, and whose only claim to it is their *virtue*, their learning, and domestic necessities, but who have no friends at Court to recommend them.

Nay ! even with respect to the *chaplains* of bishops, in whom we might justly expect, and where indeed we may often find, great piety and great erudition, I can, from actual knowledge, say, that even *they* are *sometimes* men who have but a slender portion of literary knowledge; and their dispositions not more remarkable for a fervent spirit of devotion than many of those who are chaplains to the nobility. Their own conduct shall be the test by which we try their principles: for, notwithstanding the clergy, thus patronized by nobles and by bishops, are seldom backward, nay are commonly earnest and importunate, to obtain the *emoluments* of the Priestly

office, *too seldom* do we find them at all solicitous to discharge the *duties* of that office. On the contrary, *these* they will readily transfer to others; and, (as the Poet says) "leave to "tattered crape the *drudgery* of "prayer:" yet, while they are content to discharge their duties by *proxy*; they always take care to be *paid* in *person*; reserving to their own share (although they do *nothing* to deserve it!) from three to perhaps ten, twelve or fourteen times the amount of the sum annually given to the men who perform, *in their stead*, all those parochial duties incumbent on the faithful ministers of the Lord.

Oh RELIGION! How many are there of those sons of Mammon who wait at thy altars!

Yet, while these Ecclesiastical underlings are obliged to drudge

through life, on the scanty subsistence of a Curacy, the beneficed clergy, who employ them, are oftentimes either rapidly accumulating large fortunes by abject penury, and every act of meanness which can reflect disgrace on the *man*, much more on the *minister*, or else are foolishly squandering their abundance, in scenes of folly and dissipation, at those places of amusement and fashionable resort where the gay and the voluptuous meet together for the purpose of indulging their various propensities.

Whatever blessings the *British* people may enjoy from their excellent *form* of government, yet there is no man of common sense, and free from prejudice, who can presume to say that such practices, as these, are what *ought* to be: no man but must admit that these things call loudly for re-

dress; and that, if they are not soon rectified, *bad* consequences will ensue.

In the agricultural concerns of this country, it is considered a wise and equitable covenant, betwixt landlord and tenant, that the fodder should be spent on the farm which produced it. I think it is equally necessary and just betwixt minister and people that the fodder which *they* find for the supply of *his* wants, should not be spent by him in another parish; or, at least, (if his own residence be dispensed with) that he should be *compelled* to allow the man whom he has appointed to be his *representative*, a sufficient share of that fodder, to enable him to be literally and completely his representative,—as well in the *parsonage-house* as in the *pulpit*.

I am well aware that some regulations have lately taken place on behalf

of our inferior clergy : but they will never be productive of much good effect : they seem calculated only to throw more power into the hands of the bishops, (who have already *too much*!) and also to burthen them with adjusting the temporal * concerns of the Priesthood: but, well adapted to set the curate and his patron at variance ; or else to be (as, I know, happens in some cases) a mere dead letter, and the evil of an *inadequate stipend* will remain just as it did before the Curates' Act was passed.

In short, it is in the *ecclesiastical* as

* This fondness for dabbling in every *pecuniary* concern of the church, is, in my opinion, disgraceful to the episcopal order. They should not be engaged in determining matters about " Mint anise and cummin," the non-essentials of religion, but should principally attend to those spiritual concerns which are " the weightier matters of " Christ's kingdom. I hope the Curates' Act will shortly be repealed on account of its inefficiency, and some better regulations supply its place.

in the *civil* department of state, *there is too much power in the hands of a FEW*, and till there is more power in more hands, i. e. until the general rights—of the priesthood and of the people—are more diffused, we must not pretend to say that we live in a land of perfect freedom; we must not assert that we have attained to that degree of liberty which is perfectly consistent with the natural and *social* rights of the human race: and consequently it will appear evident, that, while every thing remains exactly *as it is*, and we are as anxious to avoid improvement as to shun a pestilence, under a false foolish fear of the *danger* of INNOVATION, (an argument often issuing from the lips of those who are the staunch friends of corruption, but which every man of *sense and honesty* would disdain to

make use of! while things remain exactly as they are) we must not look for a virtuous and brave* people, nor for an incorrupt body of clergymen.

Thus, you see, a *corrupt discipline* is one great source of a corrupt priesthood: and while many servile,

* This assertion, possibly, may be laughed at by those who seldom judge rightly of any thing, saying, 'Is there a *braver* nation under heaven than the English, at this day?' Now objects commonly appear to men according to the medium through which they are viewed: therefore ideas of bravery may be different. My idea is that those are the bravest people who will not live under oppression from tyrannical rulers. Others consider bravery as consisting in *resolute* fighting against national foes. But let them answer this question, — Can a nation of slaves be brave men? Probably they will say, No. Yet there have been armies composed entirely of slaves, who have, on some occasions, fought with astonishing courage, and came off victorious. Ergo, the mere act of fighting is not a certain proof of bravery; but it depends upon the occasion and circumstances: and hence, the man whose life is taken away contending for the *liberties* of his country, is more entitled to be enrolled on the list of Heroes than he who falls in the unjustifiable wars of imperious ambition.

despicable characters are pampered with luxurious diet and excess of affluence, not a few of the best men in the sacred order are struggling under pecuniary embarrassments, and their minds disturbed for want of a sufficiency to support the *proper* dignity of their station.

Do not our newspapers repeatedly present us with accounts of *distressed* clergymen; and appeal to our benevolence for the relief of their necessities? Nay, are there not, in several parts of the kingdom, institutions on a large scale, for the express purpose of relieving the *necessitous* clergy*, their widows, and orphans? Yet though the liberal contributions annually given on these occasions reflect

* I say nothing concerning Mr. Stock's annual bounty to ten indigent clergymen, because plain facts speak for themselves. My allusion, above, is to the Musical Festivals, and Meetings for the sons and daughters of the clergy.

great honor on the gracious donors, that the necessity for them should exist in so extensive a degree as it does, must be admitted a national disgrace, by all who reflect on the subject with an unprejudiced mind; and, I am strongly induced to believe, that the odium arising therefrom does more than counterbalance the honour which accrues to the people from such benevolent charity.

Now from whence does the evil proceed? Not from an unavoidable necessity; but from the scanty, unequal, and disgraceful provision afforded to a part of the clergy. For, let us take a view of those widows, and orphans, and others, who are the objects of these charitable institutions; and whom shall we find them to be? Are they the widows and children of men who were well provided for, with

preferment to a considerable amount; but whose benevolence of heart was not circumscribed within the bounds of discretion, and therefore spent that substance, in doing good to others, which they ought—in justice as well as prudence—to have reserved for the good of their own families? Or are they the widows and children of those clergymen who have been reduced from affluence to indigence by a series of unavoidable losses and misfortunes? No! in neither of these cases will the majority of the objects be fairly classed. Who are they then? Are they the relicts and orphans of men of *profligate* characters, who were a disgrace to the office which they held; and who, by pride and extravagance, reduced themselves and their families to penury? Perhaps in a few instances, this might be the

case, but, in general their husbands and fathers were men who toiled hard in Christ's vineyard, and yet received but little wages. Men who did not come in at the eleventh hour and receive their penny equal with the rest, but men who bore the heat and burthen of the day, and yet received little more than a farthing for all their toil and trouble. This is the *principal* cause why there are so many clergymen's families left in distress; and I again say, it is a *national* disgrace, that such a cause of misery should be suffered to exist. Is this acting any thing near to the Gospel rules, where we find that the labourers in the parable, did *each* receive a penny? If the Gospel has not laid down any positive rules for the formation and plan of church-government, but left them to be modified

by the wisdom and discretion of man, yet certainly it never could be designed that the ecclesiastical ordinances of men should swerve so far from the spirit of the gospel, as we find to prevail even in this country.

Ye men of England! Ye virtuous descendants from the brave repellers of tyrants! let not an abhorrence of *one* extreme lead you incautiously into *the other*; nor, in order to shun the miseries of democracy and infidelity, suffer yourselves to be any longer the dupes of sanctimonious knavery. Let not the fine compositions and animated delivery of the pulpit orators (who, on such occasions, exhort you to open the hand of charity, and to encourage such benevolent institutions,) impose on your understandings. Think a little for yourselves! and, if you do, you will shortly be

convinced, that, such ingenious reasoning is only the mere artifice of men who endeavour to persuade the public to make up—by *their* bounty—those deficiencies which are occasioned by their own *inequitable*—though legal—possessions. In judging of ecclesiastical discipline, let us make the same appeal as a celebrated divine once did concerning a right faith,

“ To the *Bible*, my brethren, to the “ *Bible!*” and let us see if from thence we can find any authority for our accumulated *pluralities*? We must be more keen-sighted than the *Lynx* if we can there discover the least command for *one* man to be *Dean* of one place, *Prebend* of another, *Rector* of a third, *Vicar* of a fourth, and so on, till *Reason*—grieved at the relics of Popery yet visible in our church, —heaves a sigh at our folly, and

pronounces us a people whose *excessive* sympathy makes us, in too many instances, a prey to the designing, the avaricious, the slothful, and the worthless.

Yet do not suppose, from the arguments you have just heard, that I am an advocate for indiscriminate rank and equal payment in the church. The parable just quoted will not authorize such a conclusion; for an evident inequality is therein signified, since, though the sum given to each was of the same amount, the labour of each was not equal towards the earning of it; but what I argue and contend for, is, that none of the Ministers of the Gospel, by law *established* in this country, should be so shamefully recompensed for their labours, that they cannot (if they have but common prudence) leave sufficient property behind them to prevent

their progeny from the necessity of subsisting upon the bounty of the opulent and well-disposed.

There are other evils which arise from a mal-administration in matters relating to the sacred office; but they may be all primarily ascribed to this source of iniquity,—the defective maintenance afforded to the inferior clergy, and that *super-abundant* recompence given to the higher orders in the church; I mean, to the BISHOPS and DIGNITARIES.

However, from this assertion, and the foregoing remarks concerning Bishops, you must not imagine that I have any enmity against the *Episcopal ORDER*. Far otherwise! and therefore am ready to confess that I really believe the episcopal form of church-government not only to be the best, but that it has the sanction

of Apostolic usage; consequently that the *Presbyterian* system of equality, however wise in *some* respects, is not without a very glaring *defect*: but, most assuredly the pompous system of the church of England, its gaudy splendour, its excessive temporal grandeur, has no sanction from the gospel; nor even from apostolic usage, but is a *corrupt* relict of the Papal hierarchy; and, as such, I sincerely hope that some regulations will take place, before long, so as to "humble the loftiness of the mitre," and to lower the crest of ecclesiastical pride.

* Let the Mitre be lessened of so much of its superfluous wealth as to make it sit light and easy on the head; yet not rendered so light as to endanger its being blown off by every "wind of doctrine," nor to be moveable by any thing less than an irresistible hurricane of popular commotion. Let it have a *sufficient* portion of solid grandeur combined with ornamental elegance, but let it not be cumbrous from excessive weight.

Oh! my countrymen! how long will ye be deluded with these idle pretensions to sanctity? "How long shall these vain thoughts lodge within ye?" [Jerem: iv, 14.] What! Can ye suppose that the essence of religion consists in such absurd pageantry as gratifies the pride of *this* world? No, No! Religion, like nature, is simple, "and her wants are few." She stands not in need of the meretricious splendid decorations of the harlot-superstition; but, like that loveliness which "needs not the foreign aid of ornament," is always most attractive when arrayed in the modest vestures of simplicity and humility.

But when a man of good intentions utters the language of boldness and truth, it behoves him to be particularly cautious to prevent any mis-

construction, or perverted use of his sentiments.

Whatever degree of indignation I may feel and express against ecclesiastical pride and it's *unnecessary* wealth, I think, after the *voluntary* confession you have just heard, of my opinion relative to the *episcopal* order, you cannot suppose that I entertain the least rancour against the Clerical character in general, or that I consider *every* such man whose professional habit is black, as having a heart of more fable complexion than his garments, rendered black by *servility, hypocrisy,* and *deceit* *. Indeed, there is too much reason to judge, that we *have*

* I wish my readers would often call to mind this sententious remark of Dr. Johnson, that

"Malevolence to the clergy is seldom at a great distance from irreverence of religion."

Witlings and Infidels lay hold on the *sacred* order as a theme for their sparkling jests, and the brilliant sallies of imagination, and while they indiscriminately censure all alike, the *great ad-*

too many such characters in the capacity of religious teachers, both amongst the ministers of the established church, and those of the dissenters: but doubtless there are, mini-

re their frothy nonsense, and the vicious applaud their impious reillery. But let them learn candour enough to remember, that

“ Parsons are just like other Men;
“ And, here and there, a grave Divine
“ Has passions, such as yours and mine.”

Churchill's *Ghost*.

All were not vestals who put on the veil! All are not saints who assume the exterior of sanctity; but as there are doubtless some blustering heroes—though real cowards—who wear *blue* and *red* clothes, so there certainly are too many sanctimonious hypocrites, and some more open infidels, who are “ clothed in *purple*” and *black*. However, as a *body* of men the clergy may safely challenge any one of equal number to exhibit an equal portion of virtue: or (to express this idea, in the better language of a better writer) “ let *free-thinkers* and *deists* say what they will, they will not be able to find, amongst any profession, so many men of inoffensive lives and sound morals, as amongst the inferior clergy.”

The man who reviles the Clerical order, cannot have a *good* heart; therefore every person, who loves goodness, should “ *note* that man and have no fellowship with him;” which is a species of excommunication that has scriptural sanction, is of all the most severe, and the most likely to produce reformation in the delinquent.

sters of both parties, the qualities of whose heads and whose hearts justify me in asserting that such men are some of the first ornaments of human nature, and the most useful members of society.

Perhaps the candour of this declaration may induce you to judge that I am free from the trammels of bigotry and confined notions in religion, and have learnt to think charitably of all denominations of men, however distinguished by religious creeds.

I praise God for it, that, the bigoted ideas, which had once a strong influence on my mind, have ceased to produce their accustomed effects; and therefore I can, without difficulty, believe that a man—whose religious persuasions vary from the established church, may not only possess as large

a portion of the reasoning faculty, but be a man of quite as much moral goodness, and (through the merits of Christ our Saviour) in as fair a way to partake of final blessedness, as those who adhere to the church of England*.

When I spake of the evil consequences resulting from a corrupt discipline in the disposal of ecclesiastical property, I was necessarily led to remark, that it contributed in no small degree to disgrace the priesthood with unworthy members of that sacred calling; and if some strong expressions were then made use of, apparently bordering upon violence, they were no stronger, nor at all more indignant, than what might

* "Two men, that are of different religions, may be both in the right way to heaven, provided they do their endeavour to find out the truth."

Essay on the Power of the Magistracy P. 54.

fairly be justified, by appealing to the infamous conduct of such men as were then alluded to.

But this corrupt discipline not only serves as a temptation to improper men to enter the ministry, but is productive of mischief in *temporal* as well as spiritual concerns. The confining so large a portion of ecclesiastical wealth among the dignitaries, and the probable attainment of that wealth depending principally on connections with the nobles of the land, has an evil tendency upon the interests of community:—a tendency which, possibly, every man may not have thought of, but which, when he has heard stated, he will admit to be a just remark.

Suppose a man has amassed a large fortune by his own industry; or has derived large estates from his an-

cestors : or from the kind legacies of friends. Supposing him also to have two (or more) sons. He probably wishes to perpetuate the family *name* and *splendor* in his *eldest* son. He therefore leaves to him more than a just portion of his large property, because the other son finds ample means of supporting *his* dignity from the revenues of the church. Hence you see, that when the church discipline is so corrupt, and the younger sons of the nobility are, in many instances, principally maintained from this source, it has a natural tendency to counteract the *pure republican* principles of our constitution, and to establish an *aristocracy**, in a far greater degree than *ought* to be admitted : whereas if the church-reve-

* Mr. Blackstone defines an aristocracy to be "the *most* oppressive of absolute governments."

Vol. 3. p: 380.

nues were more diffused ; or, if the mode of *obtaining* them was established upon such principles of equity and independence, that it would be *casual* and precarious as to such an event happening to any man ; and the son of a yeoman, admitted to the priesthood, having (*as he ought to have* *) as fair a *chance* for attaining to the best livings and the highest ecclesiastical honours, as the son of a peer ; — the natural consequence would be, that property in general would be more *divided* ; (a species of *division* that would tend to promote *union* !) the men of wealth would not leave any of their sons to depend upon a precarious subsistence, a mere contingency ; and therefore we should not have in our country half that number of overgrown estates, that

* See Note at the end.

immense property, centered in a single person, which we now have.

Consequently, there would be more general happiness, if the sum annually collected from the *country* by *this* branch of *taxation* was more equitably disposed of, and better regulated than we find it is.

XIII. But the question which here naturally arises, is, How is this point to be obtained? By what means are we to expect such regulations to be produced? or, from what source are we to look for the removal of those things which are now so manifestly injurious to the good of the nation?

Why one might reasonably look for the removal of national grievances to be accomplished by the national legislature: because a great portion of the national *wisdom* may

justly be supposed to be brought as it were into a focus and centred in the parliament. This is certainly the *best* mode: and, I presume, it was *principally* for this purpose that legislative assemblies were first established, and have since *been suffered* to continue;—not merely to frame laws at their own pleasure, suitable to their own immediate interests, and to force the people to obey them; but to legislate for the good of the whole; and to remove legally such grievances* and encroachments upon the

* “ Among our ancestors one of the principal ends of calling parliaments was for the redress of grievances which may happen; and this, in former days was so well known, that, when writs have been issued out for summoning parliaments, our kings usually sent their writs to the sheriffs of the several counties, to summon all persons to give in their *complaints of grievances* against the ministers of state, and other great officers of the realm. The redress of grievances was generally the first thing entered upon in the old English parliaments, and was *always* taken care of before any *Money-bills* were passed.”

general rights, as may come to their knowledge, either by their own observation, or by petitions *from the people* expressly to that end.

XIV. The next question originating out of the matter of our discourse, is, Have we any reason to hope that *our* legislators will *attend* to our petitions?

The answer to this question is involved in some difficulties. We certainly have a *right* to expect attention from them to such petitions as are couched in proper language: for, the members of the House of Commons are to be considered only as the *honourable delegates of the people*, sent to the senate-house for the *convenience* of the nation, and to whom is entrusted a power of acting according to their *own* judgments, on all occasions when their constituents

do not think proper to signify what vote *they* would wish to be given on any particular question : BUT—*when- ever* the majority of the electors communicate their sentiments and request, *by that* written document of the public opinion, the delegate (in *my* judgment) is bound to regulate his parliamentary conduct; or otherwise, the members of the House of Commons are not to be considered the representatives of the people, but as a set of men who, under artful pretences, delusive promises, or by means of bribery and purchase, have obtained a seat in parliament, and are in league with other designing men, to frame such laws as to them shall seem proper, regardless of the will of the people. Now, if the people are *not* represented, some conse-

quences naturally follow, which place senatorial decrees in no very favorable point of view. However, respecting the degree and extent of *obligation* on the part of representatives to abide by the instructions or desire of their constituents, men of great political knowledge have held *different* sentiments; and it has been said, that, "they are to legislate for the *empire*, and *not* to be guided by such instructions as may originate from mere *local* interests*." To such a sentiment, I, for one, thus avow my decided negative: for by no other mode can the national opinion be *fairly* known, and therefore when the electors do not interfere, such non-interference is a tacit approbation of the conduct of their

* See Note at the end.

delegate : consequently, if the House of Commons are fairly elected, their voice may *then* be *justly* denominated the voice of the people. On this principle, my former assertion stands good, *viz.* that we have a *right* to expect our senators will attend to our petitions : but, whatever right we have, there is not much reason to hope that they *will* do so. I mean that however much they may be convinced that the tenor of our petition is founded on justice, they will be very reluctant to gratify such wishes of the people as militate against their own *interests*, although acquired by *usurpation* ; and seldom will do so till they find it is in vain to resist the *clamours of the oppressed* : for (as a judicious historical writer observes) “ We must not expect any *body* of men to possess that self-

"denying virtue which *individuals*
 "sometimes manifest. They will not a-
 "bandon usurped power, nor renounce
 "lucrative error. Reformation never
 "proceeds from themselves, but is
 "always *forced* upon them by some
 "foreign hand." *History of Scotland.*

That these sentiments of the elo-
 quent *Robertson* are perfectly just,
 shall be proved by a few questions
 and comments thereon. Are there
 no corruptions existing in the go-
 vernment of this country? Are there
 no instances of usurped power? If
 there are, can it be supposed that our
 senators are ignorant of them? Have
 not many books been published with
 the sole view of pointing them out?
 Yes! during the last century an im-
 mense number have appeared, which
 carry such clear conviction in their

arguments, that it is not possible for the human mind to resist the force and evidence of them. Why then do our grievances remain unredressed? Because men in power are tenacious of their privileges, and will persist in the enjoyment of lucrative error till they are compelled to relinquish it*.

That such petitions, of the people of this country, will meet with but a *cool* reception in the senate, there is but too much reason to conclude from the little regard hitherto shewn to those petitions which have been preferred relative to *parliamentary*

* Mr. Knox, in the second Volume of his *Essays*, P: 391, says thus,

"All men who possess power, well established and confirmed, are naturally inclined to extend and engross it. Then let a spirit be constantly encouraged among the people at large, which may lead them to a jealous vigilance over the possessors of power, and animate them to a manly resistance on the slightest infringement of LIBERTY."

reform: the necessity of which has been admitted by some of the *wisest* and *best* men that *have* lived and are *now* living; and yet regardless of their cogent arguments, and in defiance of their earnest endeavours to aid the united voice of a large body of petitioners, the evils complained of still continue, ministerial corruption is not diminished but encreasing, and septennial* parliaments are still persisted in, in violation of those excellent principles of government established at the time of *the* REVOLUTION.

XV. Yet, inauspicious as the prospect of success may be, it is

* The walls of our senate-house have frequently resounded with some of the finest specimens of eloquence and argument relative to *abridging* the *duration* of parliaments; and many excellent writers have directed their labours to the same end; but, of those which have fallen under my observation, none, in solid argument, have surpassed Lord Bolingbroke, in his *Dissertation on Parties*, P: 128 to 137.

certainly an incumbent duty upon every people to try, not merely once or twice, but several times, by petition, for the peaceable and honourable redress of the grievances they labour under; and in proportion as the legislators shew themselves haughty and indignant, in proportion as the petitions are slighted and passed over with contempt, the language of the people should be more *decided* and *resolute*; and if, at last, they should be compelled to appeal to *force*, for the attainment of those rights which they sought for *in vain* by *petition*, reason and common sense declare, that, whatever evil consequences may ensue, are not justly chargeable upon the people, but upon their *wilfully deaf* rulers, who "having ears to hear, yet would not hear."

I am well aware that popular

commotions are in themselves such *dreadful* evils, that every good man would wish, if possible, to prevent them; and "rather bear *some* evils " which we know, than hazard others " which we know not of."

XVI. But, however terrific national tumults may be, there are some popular rights so important in their nature, that they preponderate every other consideration that can be put in counterbalance, and for the preservation of which a *good* man, (a patriot and a christian) would sooner hazard life itself than live and lose them; because, they are rights wherein succeeding generations will be as much interested as those who are now on earth; and consequently our *own* rights, and the rights of our *children*, and of our *children's children*, unitedly demand our exertions and courage

not to suffer ourselves to be *robbed* of such valuable treasures.

XVII. If the people, in any nation, tamely continue to suffer an encroachment upon their rights and privileges, and, on account of some mistaken notions concerning passive obedience and non-resistance, permit their rulers to do just as they please, without daring spiritedly to say, "Thus far shall ye go, but no farther," the consequence, in course of time, will be, that every such government, whatever share of liberty the subjects may, at one time, have possessed, must ultimately degenerate into absolute despotism. Such is the natural tendency of political supineness in a people! therefore it behoves them to be *vigilant*; consequently "what I say unto you," I design to "say unto you all, that is **WATCH!**"

look about ye! take care of your civil and political treasures! and, (if *occasion* be,) rather stand up manfully against tyranny than basely suffer the alienation of your rights *.

Indeed a political writer remarks that "Civil dissensions have often, "*among us*, been favourable to the "cause of freedom:" another gentleman makes use of these words,— "Of all nations, *Britain* has least cause "to fear a change; for she has ever "risen more formidable from the "temporary dissolution of her government:" and a third says, that "Mutinies are salutary to the commonwealth: like storms, they make "a bustle for a while, but they clear

* Mr. Fox, in his speech at his anniversary dinner, justly, remarked, that, fashionable as it was with some persons to reprobate the Rights of Man, "there are Rights of Man, which, where "they are not declared nor regarded, there is no "legal foundation for government."

"the air, and prevent a future infection."

But whatever any ingenious or paradoxical writers may assert, I must own that I never wish to see the experiment tried again, by even a *temporary* dissolution of our government. I hope we can retain such parts of freedom as we yet enjoy, recover such as we have lost, and bring about *reform*, by a *milder* process: and that we shall not be disappointed in our wish, when, with true patriotic ardor we say to our constitution, "in the expiring language of Father Paul, "ESTO PERPETUA," Mayest thou continue for ever! yes! mayest thou be ever untainted by corruption, and thy grand principles remain unaltered by the wild projects of the visionary politician.

Our constitution is an admirable

one! the justly boasted pride of Englishmen, and the source of envy and admiration amongst foreigners: but our discipline is so grievously corrupt as to counteract and defeat those blessings which we should otherwise derive from our *tri-partite* system of legislation.

XVIII. Yet, corrupt as every man must admit it to be—who speaks the real language of the heart, there are those persons, who, (probably from some degree of personal *timidity*, combined with motives of humanity) will say, that bad as it is, or even if it were ten times worse, it would be preferable to the horrors of civil war, when (as Churchill expresses it) “friend stands against friend, and “brother against brother; and the “son’s weapon drinks the father’s “blood.” “War, (*say they*), against a

common enemy, is attended with so much misery, immediate and consequent, that nothing but *inevitable necessity* can justify our having recourse to so dreadful an expedient for the defence or recovery of our rights: but, at *civil war* * our nature stands aghast, and we shudder at the idea of such complicated misery, such inexpressible wretchedness, as only Fiends can receive any pleasure from."

Now I have before said, that if the unrelenting obstinacy of the rulers should be such as to compel the people to have recourse to so *desperate* a

* In a Treatise on Government written soon after the Revolution, civil war is defined to be "a *raging fever*, that goes away of itself when "the humours that fed it are spent; and is "sometimes no more than the signs of a health "too florid, and the effects of too much blood in "the body politic.

"But ill conduct in a state, if it is of any continuance, wastes it by slow and certain degrees, "and at last brings an incurable *consumption* upon "all its parts and limbs."

remedy, then, whatever blood may be shed in the struggle, and whatever evils may ensue thereupon, it is evident that the SIN thereof must be affixed upon those whose pride and pertinacity provoked the quarrel; and therefore against such the arm of vengeance should be most strenuously directed.

God forbid that ever this country should *again* experience the horrors of intestine war! The page of British history * will inform us, and we have now an impressive lesson

* They who have read "Hutton's Battle of Bosworth Field," containing an History of the bloody contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, need no further arguments to excite the most invincible detestation of civil war. Let us hope that the spirit which influenced the *Plantagenets* will never revive in any of their successors; but, if the glittering honours of a diadem should urge any of them to aim at embroiling the nation in such troubles, merely that *They* may "swim to sovereign rule through seas of blood," let us trust that the national spirit will oppose their endeavours, and that the wisdom of experience, so dearly bought by our forefathers, will

in France sufficient to convince us, of the desolation that ensues when a people are divided in war amongst themselves. Every circumstance, duly weighed, must create a strong abhorrence of internal hostilities; and teach both rulers and people that *concession* and *submission* must ultimately tend to the greatest mutual advantage: but, if ever circumstances should be such that LIBERTY, the guardian genius of the British Island, should be *obliged* to call forth her votaries, and hoist her martial banners against the standards of tyranny and corruption; if ever it *should* be so, (and what *has been* may be again!

convince the people that it would be better, much better in every respect, immediately to put an end to the lives of two, or ten, ambitious men wearing *ducal* coronets, than suffer *them* to be the cause of ten times ten thousand being massacred in battle:—and thus if they strive for a *crown* let each of them obtain one—the crown of martyrdom, in the noble cause of earthly ambition.

Diseases in the body politic not being like *some* eruptive fevers in the natural body, which, when they have once committed their ravages, can ravage *no more!* if ever the body politic should again labour under an *eruptive* fever, in order to throw off that peccant matter of *corruption* which debilitates the energy of its operations;) then, I hope the bold assertors of freedom will “acquit themselves like men,” and not forget the counsel which a General, in times of old, gave to his troops previous to battle,

Soldiers! strike at the Face!

If we mean to purify the stream, let us begin at the fountain: if we mean to subdue the enemies of freedom, let us strike at the head of them.

XIX. But let me not leave op-

portunity for the least perversion of sentiment. I would sooner that you, my auditors, should be disgusted "at the frequent recurrence of qualifying" and explanatory phrases, than suffer "any risk of occasional misconstruction." (*Gisborne's Duties of Women.*)

I do not mean by the head to allude to the *King*, who is generally considered as the legal HEAD* of the people; for I shall ever agree with the patriotic Churchill, that the *person* of the KING stands secure in royalty,

* Lord Bolingbroke considers him as such, for he says

"A King of Great Britain is now strictly and properly (what kings always should be) a member, but the supreme member, or the *head*—of a political body." P: 103.

Now, it has long appeared to me a paradoxical sort of assertion, to call the *executive* magistrate—the head. Accurately speaking he is the *arm* of the body politic. The deliberative faculty in man has always been considered as residing in the head; therefore wherever the deliberative power in legislation is vested, *that* ought rather to be denominated the political *head*. The head must *devise*, but the hand and arm must *execute*.

"and sacred is the fountain of *his* "blood," if it be possible to avoid shedding it.

By the Head is here meant those subjects, whatever their rank and property, who are the principal opposers of the redress of national grievances, and who may *therefore* be the principal cause of national tumult. But if the friends of reform go the *right* way to work, I do not think that civil war can ever proceed to any alarming extent. If indeed they will *rashly* form cabals, and suddenly take up arms, without having universally divulged their intentions to do so, without declaring their reasons *for* such conduct, and by that means trying what influence their sentiments may have on the minds of their fellow-citizens in general, if thus precipitately they rush into hostile

opposition against the ruling powers, it is but reasonable to expect that the executive part of administration will call in, to their own aid, the military force of the country, and carnage and slaughter will ensue; because the *military* being engaged, and *paid* *, by the executive government, and having bound themselves by *oath* to be at *their* command, it is natural to suppose that they would fulfil their obligations, when demanded to do so. This is one strong reason, why a large *standing army* †, in any country, is extremely dangerous to liberty.

* "The army are paid *ultimately* by the people, but immediately by the crown; raised by the crown, officered by the crown, commanded by the crown." *Blackstone*, Vol. I. P. 336.

† "A *septennial* parliament, or a *standing army* were things altogether unknown to our ancestors, and perhaps would have appeared to them to have made as great an alteration in the constitution of this kingdom as if it was changed to a commonwealth."

XX. However, in *this* country, if the people are prudent in the mode they adopt for the security or recovery of their rights and privileges, and do not *hastily* appeal to the dernier resort, (that of ARMS) then, I think, the soldiery are not an object to be dreaded, but, on the contrary, to be regarded with esteem; since, if men trained to martial discipline espouse the cause of liberty, they are the most likely to be successful champions in so glorious an undertaking as that which resists the encroachments of tyranny.

It is true, as I just mentioned, the soldiers engage by oath to serve the executive government, but they also engage to serve their country; and therefore when the executive power attempts to trample on the liberties of the people, the obligation of that

compound oath ceases in part to operate : they are not bound to assist in enslaving their country, but to preserve its freedom ; consequently as it is one part of their duty to repel popular turbulence excited against *just laws*, it is equally so to oppose arbitrary domination ; and hence, it is not improbable, that, when the great body of the citizens are resolved to contend for their invaded rights, and *determined* either to succeed or perish in the attempt, if the soldiery are properly informed, and made clearly acquainted with the object of the people's struggle, I really believe (considering them as a body of men of sound sense) that they would not act the part of the blood-hounds of despotism, but would much sooner turn their arms against those men who should *dare* to say that BRITONS shall be *Slaves*.

This observation is not meant to be extended universally to all who "wear the livery of slaughter," but with some degree of limitation.

Considered in itself, the profession of Arms has a strong tendency to impress men with a sanguinary and ferocious temper; still however, the bias of *nature* will, *in minds not greatly depraved*, prevail over that of habit and education; and hence, it is no unfair inference, to suppose, that the majority of the officers, the subalterns, and of the rank and file, would incline to those tender compunctions of nature which are grieved at the effusion of human blood; and still greater reluctance would they manifest to shed the blood of their own countrymen and fellow-subjects.

But as an army is unavoidably composed of all sorts of men—Men

of refined feelings, and men *without one feeling* for their kind,—we must likewise suppose that there would be *some* Russians amongst them of such profligate and abandoned principles, that they would thrust their bayonets through a man, and even that man a fellow-citizen, with almost as much unconcern as they would through a wolf or a tyger: and particularly so when urged to it under the assurance of pecuniary recompence.

These, however, it is to be hoped, are comparatively few; consequently, if there is a proper intercourse kept up betwixt the soldiers and the citizens, one may venture to assert, that the latter have little to dread from the opposition of the former, provided they stand up like men in a *good* cause, and attempt no more than what Reason must approve.

This last sentence, respecting a *proper* intercourse betwixt the soldier and the citizen, naturally leads me to make a few remarks on a subject which has excited no small alarm through the country, and that is

On the ERECTION of BARRACKS; which some men of eminent talents (and, I believe, of honest hearts) have represented, with all the force of glowing eloquence, as the prelude to our subjugation, and to the complete overthrow of our liberties.

On this subject, I frankly confess myself unable to give a decided sentiment. Barracks certainly have their conveniences, in *many* respects; and, in a mixed government, (such as ours) are more particularly useful at such times when the spirit of democracy appears *too* predominant; for they tend to produce that effect which a certain

emphatical speaker in our House of Commons said was highly requisite at *this* time, *viz.*—"that, if the people would not be *dumb*, the soldiers must "be rendered *deaf**."

But in opposition to the erection of Barracks, you shall hear what *Montesquieu* has declared, a man whose acknowledged science in Politics, entitles every thing that he asserts, to no small degree of veneration: and, in this instance, his words are the following,

"To prevent the *executive* power from being able to *oppress*, the *legislative* power should have a right to *disband* the armies as soon as it pleased; and the SOLDIERS should *live* in common *with the PEOPLE*: NO separate Camp, BARRACKS, or Fortrefs, should be suffered." B, xi. ch. 6.

* From one of our Newspapers I have lately learnt that these buildings are sarcastically and wittily denominated—*deaf* and *dumb* Academies.

However they *are* suffered ! but it does not follow that they are always to be filled with *soldiers* : on the contrary, when the spirit of democracy, which appears to have overflowed its boundaries, shall have subsided within its proper channel, then there will be less necessity for the aid of soldiers; and hence, when the army is greatly disbanded ; and the cannon, the musket, and the sword, are exchanged for the ploughshare, the shuttle, and the hammer ; (instruments much better adapted for the promotion of happiness!) we may hope to see many of those edifices which are *now* appropriated to the use of *arms*, *then* converted into places for the carrying on of some *useful* manufactories, and continue so as long as the nation shall be free from the dangers of popular turbulence.

XXI. All I have further to say on this subject, is, that I am sorry to see an invidious distinction drawn betwixt the *soldier* and the *citizen*; a distinction which is highly impolitic, since it tends to separate those persons in affection who compose the two great classes of society; and who ought to consider their separate interests as reciprocally beneficial: but especially the soldier should consider *his* interest as involved in that of the citizen; for, though he has, by covenant, relinquished *some* of the rights of citizenship, yet *his* descendants will be entitled to all civil privileges, till they choose to give up, as their progenitor did, by voluntary contract, those rights which no power on earth has a right to take away: and therefore it is the interest of the soldier *if he loves his CHILDREN*, to guard

the citizen, as far as he is able, from being deprived of his *birthright*, and whatever other advantages he may be fairly entitled to by the social compact.—If the citizen is made a slave, the soldier cannot strictly be considered a Freeman*.

XXII. But when we come, with the eye of a moral philosopher, to look into the nature of man, his origin, his duration, and his end, it is but a melancholy circumstance to reflect that such a profession, as that of the Soldier, should *ever* have been instituted. Considering that the period of man's existence upon earth, is, at the longest, but a short one, and *that* too interrupted with many unavoidable evils, is it not shocking to behold the various modes which man's cunning has devised for ren-

* See Note at the end.

dering human life still shorter? Is there not such an ample portion of *natural* evil in the world, that we need not have recourse to any *artificial* means for the augmentation of our troubles? Thus circumstanced, and considering WAR as the nursery of vice, the hot-bed of calamities, the primary cause of heavy taxes, consequently, of the decay of trade, and thereby of poverty; in short, considering it as the grand engine which our implacable enemy makes use of to annoy our happiness, Is it not terrible to think that a set of men are *professionally* set apart, for the destruction of their fellow-men*? Such however, has been the case from the

* In an old collection of Theological and Political Essays, containing many excellencies, when speaking of man's pride and treachery, there are some observations which are so apposite to my present purpose that I cannot refrain from bringing them before my readers,

“ Men have no enemies more inveterate than

earliest ages recorded in history ; and, *practically* convinced of the malignant dispositions which the heart of man too frequently displays in some acts of violence, rapine, and fraud, it is to be feared that such a profession will always be, *in some degree*, necessary to the end of time, in order to curb the malice of the wicked, and to keep the licentious in awe.

Yet, delusive as the hope may be, it is at least a pleasing one, and therefore let us *indulge* the hope, that there *will* come a time, (and let us hope it is at no great distance !) when the only weapons which man will make use of against man will be those

those of their own species. Like the soldiers of *Cadmus*, they are no sooner sprung up but they are at variance ; no sooner are they able to draw the sword, but they are armed for destruction ; as though they had been born for no other end than to consume one another. These are such as delight in blood and mischief, and have nothing *human* in them but the Shape."

which nature has furnished him with for the exercise of his *reason*; or at least that all the implements which men have fabricated for the extermination of each other, will be discarded, and that violence shall be no more heard in our land ;'' (Isaiah, 60, 18.) that the thundering of cannon shall cease to appal the timid; that the sword shall be no longer stained with the blood of man; nor the dagger held in the hand for the purpose of annoyance and self-defence; but that, if *daggers* must be employed, they shall be *daggers of the tongue*; for it is better to *speake* daggers than to *use* them; since, in the one case, the guilty only could feel the wounds which may be inflicted, in the other the innocent may suffer equally with the guilty.

O! what a blessed glorious circum-

stance would fit be, and what a large sum would be thrown into the general stock of human happiness; if *Nations* would abolish all the murdering instruments of *war*, and universally consent never to enter into any further hostilities with each other than such as may be fought with, and determined by, those two weapons which nature, combined with art, has furnished for the intellectual combat, viz: the TONGUE and the PEN *.

But, *man is his own enemy, and his*

* An ingenious Foreigner, speaking of the *Hottentots*, has observed, that "it is not by impetuosity, and the *drawn sword*, mankind are to be civilized." If the minds of Savages become thus indignant at coercion, how much greater aversion must be produced by violence exercised on a people whose minds are enlightened by the Rays of Science? Certainly *wise* legislators would rather appeal to the labours of the *tongue* and *pen*, as the most rational mode they can adopt for regulating the conduct of rational beings. Compulsive obedience may, indeed, be extorted from *slaves*; and, like the action of a pendulum, may continue as long as the momentum continues to operate; but the obedience of Freemen may

wits are employed to make himself wretched !

XXIII. For a proof of this maxim, let us, without any further retrospect, refer only to the occurrences of the last seven years, and we shall find almost every power in Europe earnestly employed in such actions as have a direct tendency to enlarge the empire of human misery. How many brave and worthy men have been slaughtered in the field of battle, and what an immense expenditure of the public treasure has there been, to carry on the *system of blood* !*

be compared to perpetual motion ; as it will never be withheld so long as their actions originate from mental influence, and a firm conviction that such obedience is founded upon principles of equity, and tends ultimately to promote the common good.

* To express these ideas in the nervous and comprehensive language of a celebrated political writer, (whose days of eminence were almost a century ago) it might be said, "*Mines* have been exhausted, and *Millions* destroyed." And yet

And now, when the belligerent powers are exhausted, so as to be unable to pursue their sanguinary *pleasures* any longer, they mutually agree to put the sword within its scabbard, and terminate a contest from which little *real* advantage has accrued to any nation, but much actual misery to every one.

It is not necessary to enumerate

not only the greater part of those poor wretches who have been the *victims* of this warfare, but even of those who have been the *instigators* of it, have called themselves CHRISTIANS. But let not their pretensions be admitted! The principles of Christianity might as soon be reconciled with those of *Belial*, as with those of the Pagan *Bellona*. The disciples of *Mahomet* may indeed be little deserving of censure for being warriors. The prejudices of *education* may be fairly urged as a palliation for their conduct: *wherein*, they have been taught that the scymeter is to be an instrument for propagating their religion: but all wars (except *defensive* ones against *Infidels*) must be altogether unjustifiable for those who profess themselves the followers of Christ.

Let all men, holding this faith, remember (as all *do*—who hold it in sincerity)—that the pacific language of their gracious master, was “Put up thy SWORD.”

the manifold evils of war: They are too obvious to require a detail in words. I only wish you would accustom yourselves to a habit of reflecting and deducing inferences from facts which come under the cognizance of your senses, without any profound or abstracted reasoning. When you behold the human figure deprived of one or both eyes, and mutilated with the loss of one or more limbs, soliciting your charity, never forget to think that, in all probability, *that is one* of the many *living* monuments of the horrors of war. When a poor woman, with a dejected countenance, and surrounded perhaps with half-starved children, makes a like application to your benevolence, you will probably find, upon enquiry, that her husband was killed in some battle or engagement.

Such are some of the cursed effects of war! and so many other evils are the inseparable attendants upon it, that every honest and good man ought to exclaim, in the language of one of our own poets, now living, "WAR is a game, which, if their subjects were but wise, KINGS should not play at." *Cowper.*

Yea! not only *kings* should be debarred from this game, but *no* ruling powers should be authorized to levy war, without the *entire* consent of the *people*, first had and obtained through the medium of their representatives; and those representatives to regulate their parliamentary conduct on the principle before laid down, *viz.* agreeable to the wishes of their constituents.

In cases where the lives of subjects are at stake, or their property to be

disposed of, in our courts of jurisprudence, we all know that the verdict of the jury is always required to be *unanimous*: therefore where the lives of many thousands are at stake, and part of the property of the whole nation is to be disposed of, as must be the case in war, one would think that a similar regulation ought to be adopted in the senate.

If however it should be said (and indeed with seeming truth in the argument) that what is easily practicable in the one case would be impracticable in the other; for, even if our senators were to vote, as they now do, without any regard to the will of the electors, it would be almost impossible to find a body of near 600 persons *unanimously* consenting to any measure of great national importance, and if no war could be

entered into without an unanimous vote from the parliament, then, a few obstinate individuals might *virtually* become the majority, and suspend the operation of those measures which would be essential to the national welfare ; therefore instead of an *unanimous* parliamentary vote, a *majority* ought to be deemed sufficient to say it is the voice of the nation.

Now, *if* the people were *fairly* represented, perhaps this position might be admitted ; but when an object, so important to the *people*, as PEACE or WAR, is to depend upon a majority of votes, and when we duly consider the *corrupt influence* which is well known to prevail in parliamentary voting, it will appear evident that it is not proper a mere majority of two or three votes should decide a question of so much importance : a ques-

tion fraught with immediate and certain evil, but, from the execution of which, the prospect of good is remote and uncertain.

It should *never* be carried affirmatively for war, without a majority of *at least* TWO TO ONE of the whole senate*: and indeed a still greater

* Every Englishman knows, or *ought* to know, that the power of *decreeing* war is vested solely in the Monarch, but the means of furnishing the expences of war reside in the Commons: and such is the nature of our constitution that "if a thing be carried by a majority of one vote, it is as binding on the subject as if it passed without a negative; and it would be as much treason to resist such a law." Hence no precaution should be left untried to guard against "soul play;" and none could be so effectual as to have a law that the majority, requisite to give sanction to *such* an expenditure of the public money should, be not less than what is herein proposed.

Yesterday (Nov. 24th.) I discovered from a newspaper that the *French* have adopted a similar regulation, the votes being as 3 to 2, in order to constitute a *legal majority*. Profligate and profane as the French rulers may be, they certainly are not fools as to that wisdom which is not said to come from the spirit of peace. They have introduced many excellent laws respecting matters of *election* and the duties of the senate; such that no government (pretending to freedom) ought to reject merely because they have been adopted in the *Convention*.

majority should be required on such a question so long as senators consider themselves independent of all popular control : but, in giving their votes on so momentous a concern as war, if the senators are to pay *due* respect to the wishes of those who sent them to the great national assembly, I am well persuaded that a majority of *two thirds* would seldom, if ever, be found ; therefore, there would be fewer wars, less blood would be spilt, and much treasure would be saved. So long as the people of any country retain a due perception of their own *real* interests, they never would consent to the first declaration of war : for such an act may be compared to the opening of *Pandora's* box ;—it emits nothing but *poisons* ; and the longer it remains open, the pure vital air (which is essential to our happy

existence) becomes more and more contaminated. It has of late remained open so long, that we are become *faint* from inhaling the deleterious and noxious vapours.

However, happily for us, it is—at last—closed and locked*, and I hope the key will be lost that it may never be opened any more.

XXIV. The very idea of PEACE is cheering to the Soul: it was the legacy that Christ left to those who were his followers; and they who *delight* † in war cannot, in sincerity be his disciples. The spirit of military

* The reader is requested to observe, that, the 23d and 24th sections of this oration, were written during that short time when the country was under the delusive information of Lord Malmſbury having concluded a treaty of peace at *Lisle*.

This statement, the author considers a sufficient apology for the introduction of some erroneous assertions as to matters of *fact*. The admonitory part of it is equally as applicable as though we were in the actual enjoyment of peace.

† See Note at the end.

ardour is inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel: though it is by no means impossible for a soldier to be a Christian. Of this we have several *scriptural* — and other historical — proofs, as well as many pleasing instances among our contemporaries.

But whatever pleas and arguments the wisdom of this world may advance to justify national hostilities, yet if weighed in the *scales of reason*, and the arguments derived from Christianity put at the opposite end of the beam, the weight of the latter will instantly preponderate, and the wisdom of this world will appear as foolishness.

However, setting aside *religious* obligations, and considering peace and war only as objects of mere human policy, even then, the former state must be the most desirable; because peace is

one great source of *plenty*, causing the fields to yield abundance at home, and extending the sails of Commerce, with less hazard, to bring the product of foreign countries to our own shores: but trade and arts (those at least which are the most contributory to happiness) seldom thrive in times of war.

Peace is that state in which the social and benevolent affections arrive to the greatest perfection and maturity. It is a cordial to the drooping spirits! It maketh a merry heart, and a merry heart, maketh a cheerful countenance. This has been exemplified within a very short time past. What joy and gladness was visible on the countenances of all ranks of persons on the late pleasing intelligence that a treaty of peace had been agreed on between the em-

bassadors of the contending nations ! a joy of which every man partook, except those—those *diabolical* minds—who care not how much misery others endure, provided that the source of misery to others does but serve to them as the means to augment their splendor, or for the accumulation of wealth,

But, as the long wished for period is at length arrived, and we are entered upon days of peace, there may be persons weak enough to suppose that such labours as those I have now undertaken are entirely unnecessary ; for, say They—“ Having obtained “ peace, we want nothing more than “ *patience*, and, in a short time, every “ thing will naturally revert into its “ proper channel *.”

* The late splendid victory of the gallant DUNCAN and his troupered Heroes, having effected such a decisive maritime Superiority, will

Such language as this is very likely to issue from a man of an honest and well-disposed heart, but whose head is by no means overstocked with political information: and, being little conversant with the events of past time, he cannot be very well qualified to predict what will happen in future.

There are *dangers* which threaten as well as *duties* incumbent on, a people in a state of peace. One of the dangers is lest an overweening confidence and false security should render men torpid and lethar-

naturally produce a greater degree of national confidence and reliance upon those men who at present direct the affairs of state. It will give a bias to those whose minds were wavering; and they, who were before attached to their measures, flushed with these glorious achievements, will hardly refrain from the language of *insolence* towards all who attempt a *reform*. But success in war cannot justify errors in administration: (or, if so, the *French* government is a good one!) So far the reverse, that the more victories we obtain, the more those errors become dangerous to liberty, and consequently demand more vigilance.

gic members of the body politic, and thus tamely suffer an infringement of their rights. This drowsiness, this torpor of the national spirit, is indeed a state of mind which may be pleasing to those who wish to rule over their fellow-creatures with the sway of despotic authority; but every man who wishes well to the cause of freedom will be grieved at heart to find the liberties of the people endangered through their own supineness and insensibility. He will therefore, with *true* medical judgment, have recourse to stimulants, to rouse them from lethargy into action; and the stimulant on which he will place the greatest dependence will be strong doses of the *mustard of reason*; because this will invigorate and warm the benumbed faculties without at all endangering the system, whereas

all the other stimulating medicines made use of in such cases are not unfrequently productive of popular delirium, which sometimes terminates in complete phrenzy.

As dangers are to be dreaded and thus guarded against, so there are certain *duties* which are peculiarly incumbent, at that time, on those who *govern* and those who *obey*. The latter are then to petition *earnestly* for the reformation of whatever is defective in the administration of state affairs; and the former are then destitute of any *reasonable* plea for non-compliance, with the reasonable wishes of the people. They cannot say that it is not a *proper* time to accomplish reform; because, if the time of *peace* be improper for such works, *no* time can be found suitable; since in the time of *war* the petitions

are treated with disregard; and the reason usually assigned for such conduct is—not from objection to the matter of the petition, but from “the *inexpediency of the season*” in which such applications are made *.

The short issue of the argument is this! The time of war (*if war is inevitable*) is a season more peculiarly adapted for resting contented with our government and laws, and for vigorous exertions against *foreign* foes. The time of peace requires our vigilance and courage to be directed against *foes at home*: and these are the enemies of whom almost every state, (but in particular Great Britain)

* A sarcastic and facetious Pen, which amused the lovers of politics, three score years ago, has recorded this pointed observation,

“Some men will pretend that *war* is a very improper juncture for redressing of grievances; and Some think *peace* a very proper conjuncture for creating grievances.”

ought to be most afraid, on the principle of "a man's greatest enemies" "being those of his own household."

I shall say no more on this subject; and a very few words shall terminate whatever I have to say.

XXV. Having thus given you my free undisguised sentiments respecting LIBERTY, and having pointed out to ye some glaring instances of mismanagement and perverted application of the national treasure, although done under the sanction of *law*, but in opposition to the law of *reason*; it only remains for me to remind you of the necessity there is for you to be earnest and importunate in your *petitions* for national reform, *wherever* any defects or corruptions appear to require it. And remember, that, if you are *prudent* in the steps you take, and are *firm* in your

determinations, to obtain justice betwixt those who legislate and those who obey, the result must be that nothing can withstand the united voice of the great majority of the people, who modestly demand a restoration of their violated rights, but, should their requests be denied, are resolved

Either to *conquer* or die.

The following sentiments taken from Mr. Addison's celebrated Tragedy, deserve to be committed to memory by every Englishman, and, changing *one* word, [of the first line] by every man on earth.

" The BRITISH people cannot long debate

" Which of the two to choose—*slav'ry* or *death* !

" A day, an hour, of virtuous Liberty,

" Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

" For though we're fond of life ; yet what *is* Life ?

" 'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air

" From time to time ; nor gaze upon the Sun :

" 'Tis *to be free*. When liberty is gone
 " Life grows inspid, and has lost its relish.
 " Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our Souls,
 " And make our *Lives*—in thy possession—happy
 " Or our *Deaths** *glorious* in thy just defence !

Act ii. sc. 1 & 3. Act iii. sc. 5.

Gentlemen and Ladies!— With
 this quotation I might very properly

* The dissolution of man is a certain—though
 to him unknown—event. To those " whose
 " hope is not in this life only," death is not so
 terrible as it is to the Infidel : and, if the matter
 be rightly considered, it is a circumstance of very
 little moment, " whether life expires through the
 " mouth or through the heart," whether we die
 calmly at 3 or 4 score on a feather-bed, or at
 20 or 30 *pierced to the vitals*. In the latter case
 the *occasion* is all that we ought to regard. If the
 cause be noble and virtuous, it would be more
 honourable and more desirable so to die, than to
 live a century and then resign our breath with the
 stigma of having lived a rogue or a slave. Not that
 life is so trivial a concern as to be wantonly sport-
 ed with. Every man ought to complete the term
 allowed him by Nature ; and therefore every man
 ought so to act as not deservedly to cruse this
 period to be shortened by Art. But,—of the two
 alternatives,—long life in bondage, or death in
 struggling for freedom, None but a base wretch
 (one of the *turpe pecus*, or the *swinish* multitude)
 would hesitate which to choose. The author's
 sentiments respecting bravery and death are al-
 ready stated in p: 107.

have ended my address, but I feel myself obligated to return my sincere thanks for the honour you have conferred on me in attending to so long an oration without manifesting any symptoms of a wish for its conclusion*: an oration, which, from the very nature of it, would not admit

* This anticipation of a favorable reception, certainly proceeds from some degree of *self-conceit*; but it is perfectly justifiable for an orator to be thus *prepared*; and, being written, I have thought proper to send it into the world, without lopping off a single sentence. Perhaps some readers may sarcastically observe, that, if several *pages* in the *beginning* had been "*lopped off*," it would not at all have lessened the author in the estimation of the public. Granted. He admits that much of the introductory matter is better adapted for oration than perusal, for the tongue than the press: however, amidst many superfluous statements, there are some tolerably good remarks. For this reason, the whole has been suffered to meet the public eye. The censures of those whom trifles may offend, will not, in the least, offend the author; and, respecting the general tenor of the pamphlet, he thus appeals to the criticism of the public, in the words of an honest man, a profound scholar, and an excellent writer,

"Nothing in this book can make one worthy
"man my *see*, and with respect to the unworthy,
"I fear not their power, and I despise their
"malevolence." *Knox, Vol. II. p: 389.*

(even if the speaker was capable of introducing) any of those touches of pleasantry that serve to keep an audience alert, and prevent their spirits from feeling the languor of weariness; but, destitute as it has been of *vivacity*, I trust it has not been defective in *sound* sense, and make no doubt that the reason of your great attention, may be justly ascribed to the *importance* of the subjects which have been thus imperfectly but honestly treated on; and that you feel the true *amor patriæ*, the true love of your country, now *glow* within you, and, when you return home, will think the subject deserving of some further consideration. And here let me observe to, ye that there are *two* things which ought to be attended to by every people, who deem the preservation of their liberties (what it

really is) an object of the first earthly importance, and those are to THINK wisely, and to ACT accordingly. Now, if you, my countrymen, will but divest yourselves of all party motives, and make the constitution, as it was planned by your forefathers, the rallying point of your reflections; and the preservation thereof, in its original purity *, the principal aim and tendency of all your actions; there is every reason to believe that your own good sense will suggest to ye the most proper and efficacious line of conduct; and I hope your resolution will be such that you will not, in any instance, leave that undone which you

* "The nearer we keep to the true poise of the constitution, on its threefold principle, the safer our liberty is, and every variation from it is dangerous to our liberty, in a degree proportionate to such variation. They who talk of liberty in Britain on any other principles than those of the British constitution, talk at best impertinently, and much charity is requisite to believe no worse of them." *Boling. Differ.* P: 195 & 148.

are well convinced *ought* to be done. Let no unpromising circumstance, at the commencement, check the ardor of your laudable designs. Let not the paucity of numbers, in the first attempts, discourage your generous efforts. Small seeds may grow to large trees! The huge oak was once but an acorn: and one oak may be the founder of a forest! Let neither *ridicule*, *censure*, nor *threats*, deter you from your virtuous * purposes. They

* A set of base fellows, both clerics and laymen (some grown rich from national plunder, and others in hopes to do as they have done) who have the vanity to assert themselves the only real patriots because they are perpetually bellowing out "the KING and *Constitution*; CHURCH and KING" and other phrases of that sort, but who—on all occasions, right or wrong—are the inflexible supporters of every measure of the present rulers of Great Britain, may perhaps endeavour to *ridicule* the pretensions of those men to VIRTUE who are the zealous advocates for *pure reform*; and every harsh epithet that a malignant heart can invent, may be, and often is, thrown out against their *principles*, their *characters*, and *circumstances*. It would be no difficult matter, to give many of such men "the retort courteous," and with more truth in the application of it.

who endeavour to reform any prevailing abuses, must expect to meet with calumny, and opposition, from men of evil minds, who have long basked in the sunshine of corruption. However, good sense, combined with fortitude, will, assuredly, triumph at last over all enemies *. That Englishmen may be enabled speedily to give the world a specimen of the truth of this assertion, should be the earnest wish and endeavour of every one who lays claim to the character of *a lover of his country*, and *one who fears God*: and let this maxim be imprinted deeply in your memory,

* Lord Bolingbroke, in his Dissertation, advances a similar idea, from which, the friends of reform may learn, that, if their endeavours fail of success, it must be owing to their own pusillanimity. Says he,

“ One continued design against liberty has been carried on, by various methods, in almost every reign. In many, the struggles have been violent, and bloody: but *liberty* hath still triumphed over force, over treachery, over corruption, and even when under oppression.” P: 144.

that—the more any man is impressed with a due fear of God, the more zealous will he be to shew himself a PATRIOT*: and, as such, he will not hesitate to risk every thing that is dear to him in *this world*, for the sake of those political liberties which can only be enjoyed in perfection under a *free* government.

If, from the foregoing discourse, any of you should be at a loss to discover that form of government to which I would give the preference, I make no scruple in saying—it is that of *limited Monarchy*: though (from several statements in the course of the oration, and in particular from having just recommended you to aim at “the preservation of our constitution

* “He who is not a friend to the common wealth cannot be a good christian; for God and nature never designed that men should be slaves to power.”

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"in its *original* purity,") this avowal seems almost *unnecessary*; however my reasons are briefly these. It is an old proverbial maxim "of two evils choose the leest." Now, a considerable degree of *power* must be lodged somewhere, or no government can be sufficiently effective. In whatever hands power is vested, it insensibly produces a disposition to tyrannise: therefore, on the supposition that *every* government will be more or less tyrannical, it is a less evil to live under the tyranny of *one* than of *many* *; because, when the grievance becomes intolerable, the

* "In a *monarchy*, punishment is, in almost every instance, prescribed by the laws of justice; while in *republics*" [or, more accurately speaking, in *democracies*] it is inflicted by prejudice, passion, and state-necessity. The *number of masters* in a republic crushes the spirit;" [or renders it impetuous, fierce, and unruly;] "but, in a monarchy, love and condence in *one* alone, raises the spirit, and renders the people" [obedient and] "happy."

Zimmerman on Solitude P: 235.

means of removing it are far less difficult in the one case than the other. But a monarchy, under wise limitations, seems capable of doing the most Good with the least ability to do mischief. This is the reason for *my* predilection; and as the reason is a good one, I hope and trust there is not one person here present, whose heart will not accompany my voice and heart, in the purport of the following *patriotic* wish,

May our CONSTITUTION live for ever, under its *triple* form of KING, LORDS and COMMONS; but *never* may the canker-worm of *corruption* so gnaw the structure of St. Stephen's Chapel, as to render the

BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS

A rotten building!

God grant it! Amen, and Amen!

NOTES.

[Continuation of the note in page 83] Senatorial duties.

IN different reigns, statutes have been made to incapacitate men holding certain offices, therein specified, from being admitted members of the House of Commons, but the prohibitions do not go far enough: They should be carried to the same extent as was decreed by the *self-denying ordinance* (so-called) in the days of CROMWELL: (an ordinance admirably adapted for the preservation of genuine liberty !) therefore no offices but such as are essential to parliamentary duties should be held by parliament-men. Even a *Peer* should be deprived of the right of sitting or voting as a senator so long as he continues to hold such disqualifying office; which regulation would tend greatly to *purify* the senate, and thereby to secure the national liberties and to preserve national peace.

In the year 1730, an oath of purgation for the House of Commons, was in a fair way of being made a part of our Statute Law, for a Bill to this effect passed through the lower house; (to the honour of that assembly) but "the *spiritual* Lords, "with the *Scotch* peers, and some others who "dwelt within the sunshine of the court, making "in all a majority of the upper house, were of "opinion it ought not to pass, and accordingly it "was rejected."

The admirable political essayist to whom I am

indebted for this information, enables me to illustrate my opinion respecting placemen and pensioners in these forcible words,

" Nothing can appear so unnatural, in a free country, as to see the *same* persons *representatives of the people*, and *servants of the crown* at the *same time* ; nor can I see how a man can act according to the dictates of his reason and conscience, if 5 or 600 pounds a year should lie at stake for every vote he gives.

" In short, men, who hang upon the skirts of a minister for subsistence cannot be free agents ; and hence I will only say, that, if a majority of the legislature should, by *pensions* and *places*, be kept constantly depending upon the ministers,—then, if our government does not run into an absolute monarchy, it will degenerate into the worst kind of *aristocracy*, the most odious and burdensome of all governments *whatsoever*."

Therefore, in order to avoid these dangers, let those who are our law-makers be debarred from degrading their characters, by accepting any *places* under government, except such as were before mentioned.

Probably this idea will be ridiculed by some as one of those schemes of *visionary* perfection which are only fit for the regions of *Eutopia* : saying that its absurdity is evident, because it is so repugnant to general practice. Perhaps it may be an unfortunate circumstance for an individual thus to oppose the general notions of mankind ; but it has been my untoward fate, for years, to think that there is, in the world,—a great deal of solemn nonsense, a great deal of idle parade, which is not now of the same use as it was formerly (because *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*, the world is grown older and men are grown wiser) and therefore, as the end of its institution has ceased, the thing itself might *as well* be abolished. How-

ever, there are some who *still* consider the national honour as essentially connected with the pomp and splendour of a court, and who will strenuously assert that its pageantry *ought* to be supported out of the *public* purse. So it certainly ought, if national happiness was thereby promoted: but, as it is not an impossibility for a court to be very rich and very splendid, and the people, at the same time, to be very poor and very wretched, it seems perfectly consistent with the dictates of REASON that *idle* court-splendor should be chiefly paid for out of the Courtier's pockets; and according to my *vulgaire* way of thinking, *Moins il y a de plaintes dans nos Rues, plus il en revient d'honneur a ceux qui habitent au dedans ou aupres des Palais*,—the less complaining there is in our streets, the more it redounds to the praise of those who reside *in* and *about* PALACES. However, complaints and murmurs *will be heard*, so long as the earnings of hard labour are wrenched, from the hands of the industrious, by rapacious *tax-gatherers*, and lavishly bestowed upon those whose chief use in life is—to fill up the train of vanity and pomp.

[It was intended that this note should finish with the words vanity and pomp; but the late "*ways and means*" having developed a plan of finance which astonishes every reasonable man at the magnitude of the demand, and the mode of procuring such prodigious supplies; I will not omit this opportunity of stating it as *my* opinion that such a budget may not improperly be denominated "*ways and means* either of entailing slavery upon our posterity, or of producing—at a period more or less remote—all the horrors of Revolutionary proceedings."

Upon a subject so serious and alarming, perhaps an expression even *bordering* upon jocularity, may be deemed reprehensible levity: but, in a social circle, of which the author was one, when

the critical situation of affairs became the topic of conversation, and of course the *triplicate* assessed taxes were introduced, he made a remark in nearly the following words,

"Various logicians and philosophers have given their various definitions of man. Some have called him the *reasoning* animal; others, the *laughing* animal; and Dr. Franklin, with great precision and pleasantry, has denominated him "the *tool-making* animal; but, I think, he may with equal truth (though inferior in accuracy) be called a *tax-paying* animal."

This distinguishing appellation is as just as it is novel; for, upon examination, we shall find that—the *beverage* of almost every sort which we daily consume, either for the purposes of sustenance, or for those of conviviality; the garments which we wear for ornament and use, whether linen, woollen, silken, or leathern; the means of intellectual amusement *daily* and annually issuing from the press; the medium of ideal intercourse betwixt men of business and distant friends; the land which we cultivate; the edifices which we inhabit; yea the very *light*, both natural and artificial, which serves to make our domes habitable; these, and almost all other things either *necessary* to man's existence upon earth or subservient to his *pleasures*, are burthened with *heavy* imposts: and For what Reason? Why in a great measure to gratify the shameful profuseness and the boundless rapacity of a set of speech-making, corrupt-voting, unfaithful, extravagant rulers, and mercenary dependents. To such an infamous extent is this system carried, that it is little short of being *intolerable*: therefore I earnestly exhort my readers to weigh—in *due time*, and with *due* seriousness,—that important question, "big with "the Fate of Empire," which concludes the note in p. 77.]

P: 124, Perhaps this sentiment may provoke the indignation of some *high-church-man*, and he will exclaim, "what a compound is here exhibited of "folly and impudence! What presumption! "What! Must the son of a low-bred peasant, "born in a cottage, who (in the days of puerility) "drove his father's plough, and looked after "his sheep, and whose education was narrow and "confined, must He (if admitted to the priest- "hood) presume to expect an equal chance for pre- "ferment with those who have been brought up in "all the refinements of polished life? The son of "a *Yeoman* be placed on an equal footing with the "son of a *Peer*? Absurdity! Nonsense! the wild "chimæras of a *fool* or a *madman*!" "Patience, my friend! Less choler and more phlegm! "Come "let us *reason* together." [Isaiah i, 18.] *All men* are equal before God; "for he regardeth not the "persons of men:" and with respect to *priests*, under the Christian dispensation, these chosen of the Lord are not confined to any particular *tribe*, family, or *rank* *. It is therefore a matter of no moment whether the holy man, who stands between the porch and the altar, first drew breath in some low-roofed dome that's covered with thatch, or in the turreted mansion of opulence. Neither is the splendor of his education to be regarded; so that it is equally unimportant whether he enters a *servitor* or a *gentleman commoner* at one of our universities; or even if he enters not at all. He studies: (either in a college or out of it.) He

* *A Priesthood not like that of the Jews, filled up from a particular race, or like that of the Hindoos, held by a separate cast in entailed succession; but supplied from every class, and branching by its widely extended ramifications into almost every individual family in the community.*

Wilberforce, M. P. On Real Christianity.

acquires knowledge : he passes his examination ; and is *canonically* admitted into the sacred order.

Now, by our laws, the priesthood, like the DEITY, is one and indivisible, or, at least—of its members, “None is afore or after another, “none is greater or less than another, but they are *all* co-equal ;” or, in other words, In *spiritual* externals they have all equal power. Every priest can equally *blest* ; equally *curse* ; equally *absolve* ; equally pray for the people ; equally administer the sacraments ; and, in every other religious rite, pertaining to the priestly office, every *priest* has an equal right and authority.

By what rule then can it be asserted, that every priest should not have an equal ability to obtain the *temporal* externals belonging to the church ? By none, that I know of ; except by that arbitrary domination which ambition has induced one part of mankind to *assume* over the other ; and to which the other, with *reprehensible* meekness, have, in every age, too readily submitted. This, my friend, is my opinion ! and tell me, candidly, if you consider these sentiments, as “the chimæras of a *madman* ?” If so, I wish the world were but *one lunatic asylum*. Then, this large BETH-LEHEM would not be a very unpleasant place wherein to pass away our threescore years and ten. If the equal rights of all men were equally attended to in theory and in practice, there would be much less misery in the world than there is ; a great many fountains of tears would be dried up, and many lines of cheerfulness be marked upon the countenance.

But as I am now talking upon Ecclesiastic matters, will say nothing more concerning *general* rights, but confine my remarks entirely to the Church.

At different periods, men of ingenuity and project have advanced their several schemes for the improvement (as *they* considered it) of Church-disci-

pline. As a projector, (and I hope not destitute of some share of ingenuity) I have a right to advance mine. Nay, it is not merely a matter of *right*, but in some measure of *duty*; founded on the old maxim that he who points out the disease should prescribe the remedy, or "*qui morbum indicavit, subministret remedium.*" Indeed, to find fault—without suggesting some mode of removing the evil, seems to partake too much of the disposition of a petulant censurer. Now if my plan of ecclesiastical discipline is better than those hitherto proposed, it *ought* to be adopted. If it is worse than that *now in use*, I am sure it can deserve nothing but supreme contempt.

In the first place, then, let there be, *un grand coup de tete*, one great stroke of *political* wisdom, and away with that extensive *unjust* church-patronage now possessed by several public officers. In whatever dioceses livings become vacant let them be disposed of, in that diocese, at some certain place, and periodically at a certain time. Let the place be some part of the *cathedral*. Let there be *semannual* visitations (March and September) at which time all the void benefices should be furnished with incumbents, consequently no lapses could happen from neglect of presentation. And (in order to shew the *equality of the priesthood*) let them be disposed of by *lottery*. No persons possessed of ecclesiastical preferment should have a claim to adventure in this lottery; for of the unbeneficed clergy I presume that there will always be more candidates than prizes. The lottery should be drawn publicly in the presence of all the clergy, and others, there assembled. The bishop, or his chancellor, with a few others, should be commissioners for managing this lottery; and to be entitled to a premium for their trouble, paid by every fortunate gainer of a prize, in proportion to its respective value. Previous to every visitation the public should be apprized of the names of

the several candidates; that, if any well-founded charges can be brought against them, for immoral practices or important neglect of duty, they may not only meet with censure according to our present laws, but be punished for it by being struck off the list for that time, and perhaps for several succeeding ones; regarding, in the degree of punishment, the enormity of the offence.

Similar regulations should be adopted with respect to the *crown-livings*. Managed by commissioners under the Lord Chancellor. Balloted for, in London, at least once every year. Twice would be better. Personal attendance from the candidates in this case to be *optional*; but, in every case, attending or not, to produce proper credentials of their character, vouched by one magistrate and half a dozen respectable householders in their parish or vicinity.

Now, Sir, what think you of this plan? Does it seem to proceed from a head whose intellect is deranged? Is it symptomatic of a distracted mind? Or can you really believe the suggester of it is "either a fool or a madman?"

No, Sir! I am well assured you will admit him to be a reasonable animal, possessing the perfect use of his rational faculties, saying, That the scheme he proposes proves him to be such; and confessing that it has, *on prima facie evidence*, many advantages, and no glaring defects. It would give a dignity to the priesthood. It would make the office more respectable, and of course the officers would be more respected. It would prevent them from being subject to any of those humiliations which are sometimes mortifying to themselves; often derogatory to their character; and at all events, a reproach to our *boasted* national freedom. Were ecclesiastical concerns thus honourably managed, it would never happen, that on the death of any incumbent, we should behold our ecclesiastics posting off with a velocity equal

to that of the *son* of Nimshi, in order to get a *first* audience with the patron, whether Commoner, Bishop, or Peer. Then they need not trouble any person for *letters of recommendation*, in order to meet with a favorable reception, and perhaps be instrumental to the obtaining of their wish. Their best recommendatory letters would be their own good conduct: and the frowns or smiles of *My Lord* would be a circumstance equally non-important to their interest: the one would be as contemptible a mode of shewing his *aversion*, as the other would be futile to manifest his *regard*.

Glorious independency! When shall thy splendor irradiate all the dark places of our Island? Power and corruption would *willingly* reply, NEVER! But in vain shall the *mighty* FEW contend against the *virtuous* MANY. As the people become more virtuous, the day of *reformation* will approach nearer: and it *must* happen sooner or later. A spirit of enquiry has pervaded all ranks of men, and every where excites a detestation of slavery. In order to avoid slavery, men, must renounce their vices, political and moral, in particular the former; therefore there will be a period when virtue may be deemed a *national* characteristic; and whoever lives in that age, will not see all things relating to the *church* conducted on the same system as they are now. National reformation, as well as national corruption, *must begin* in the church. Those badges of vassalage, which have just been alluded to, *must* be destroyed; and *will* be so, when "REASON shall complete her triumph over all
" the barbarous inventions of human policy,"

[P: 129] * Mr. Blackstone, in his first volume, p: 159, states sentiments to *this* effect; but highly as I venerate the great Commentator on British jurisprudence, I cannot, in this instance, subscribe my assent to his opinion.

Still less can I agree with Mr. *Burke*, in his

speech to the electors at Bristol, where, with infamous sophistry, he says thus, " You choose a member, but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but a Member of Parliament." When he has duly taken his seat he certainly is a member of parliament, and yet *possibly* (for all I know to the contrary) may not be a member of Bristol; but this I know, that he must be *the* member for Bristol. What! Is the understanding of the people transferred with their votes? Or, Is all their good sense immediately infused into the member, that he is to be admitted not merely the *best* but the *sole* judge of the people's interest? This idea—that members of parliament are to act totally independent of the will of the electors—was not exactly *la pensée a la mode* a few centuries ago, for Lord Coke has informed us, that

" In a parliament held in the 9th Edw. III. (in order to enable the king to prosecute the war with vigour) it was moved, that a subsidy should be granted of a new kind; but the *Commons* answered, that it would be necessary for *them* to have *conference with the people* of the several cities, counties, and Boroughs (*who had put them in trust*) before they could treat of any such matter." His Lordship tells us that " this conference of the " members with their Principals, previous to the " granting of a new tax or subsidy, is warrantable " by the *law and custom* of parliament." But, as his lordship and Mr. Burke do not exactly *square* in their ideas, Let Sages determine which is right, —the sound lawyer or the florid orator. If Mr. Burke's position be just, then (in *my* opinion) the result must be clearly this.—It is necessary that the House of Commons should consist of a certain number of members, but whether these gentlemen are selected from the different counties, or all chosen by the city of London, cannot be a matter of any importance, because, when they are returned members of the senate, they have nothing to do

with "local interests;" they are not members of London but members of parliament, and of course to be only attentive to the good of the empire.

But, as it is possible that *senators* (being but men) may sometimes prefer the good of *themselves* to that of the empire; and as it is also possible that *Ministers* (being but men) may not scruple to acquire majorities by means not altogether pure; and as *septennial* parliaments afford too great opportunity for corrupt representatives to do great national injury; it certainly would be a point of the highest prudence, in every body of electors never to send any man as their delegate who had not previously promised, *on his honour*, that he would, *at all times*, consider himself the Organ of the public Voice, and the instrument of signifying *their will**. This popular control over the senate would be a great barrier to corruption *within* doors (and probably therefore would have some influence *without*!) for though a minister may prevail by bribery over *a few*, he could not gain a majority of the *people* by any other mode than upright honest conduct: consequently, there would not be the same temptation for a minister to use dishonest practices, if he was not sure that the *bribee* could vote as he pleased.

Irresistibly cogent as these arguments appear to the author, possibly some of his readers, fascinated by the authority of such intellectual luminaries as

* If such sentiments as have been lately advanced in the British Senate by a Mr. Yorke are to be endured much longer, then, Farewell to the name of Freedom! Farewell to the liberties of Englishmen, when whatever they have hitherto considered as valuable is to lie at the mercy of a Delegate who makes his own "conscience" the rule of his actions in, preference to the consciences and judgments of those who deputed him to act as their representative!

Blackstone and *Burke*, may consider it as no small proof of arrogance in any man to oppose *their* decisions; for, upon some minds, *great names* have such great influence that they will not indulge in the exercise of their faculties, but will even *think* by proxy. There are others in the world who venerate plain *common sense* more than high reputation for literary talents, and these men will dare to have an opinion of *their own*, even if it should contradict the sentiments of men renowned for wisdom, because the wisest may *sometimes* err, and the most sagacious may be deceived.

[P: 155] * *Blackstone* says that "the soldier does not put off the citizen when he enters the camp." I wish this was to be strictly the case, and that every man were compelled, for a time, to learn so much of the use of arms as to qualify him for the defence of his country. This might be done, if *no substitutes* were allowed in the *Militia*, to either rich or poor, between the age of 16 and 36, except in cases of *ill-health*, or such *bodily imbecility* as would render them more adapted for the distaff than the pikestaff, better suited to turn over coloured silks than to carry regimental colours. Indeed, *Medical* men, (on account of their importance in society, and the uncertainty when their professional services may be wanted) should be allowed the privilege of substitutes, *at any age*, should they be disposed to avail themselves of such a right; but, during the *bi-decennial* period above mentioned, no other men, whatever their sphere, rank, or opulence, neither priests, lords, nor merchants, should be indulged with an exemption from the *chance* of acquiring such a practical knowledge of *Tactics* as to qualify them for being actually soldiers, at such times of emergency when their country may require their exertions. Were this to be an invariable rule, and the *militia* to be *augmented*, the *expence* and *danger* of a standing

army would be at one stroke superseded; and thus might Mr. Erskine's bold figurative language be so far realized, that "every house and cottage in Great Britain and Ireland would be a *barrack* for the soldiers of their country." *Erskine's View*, p. 18.

Arms, as a profession, I abhor. Being a sincere lover of freedom, I cannot say (as the Chaplain says to *Chamont* in the Orphan) "I love a soldier;" *because*, in all countries, the *soldier* is the grand instrument of supporting the cause of tyranny; and a government which is upheld by the bayonet can never be a *free* government. Hence the absurdity of supposing that the FRENCH are *Free-Men*. They *are* (at present, and *have been* ever since the Revolution was completed) in a state of thralldom not less grievous than they were at any time during the preceding century: i. e. in subjection to the worst of men, pursuing, in many instances, the worst of measures. Ardent as I am in the cause of *rational* liberty, yet I confess that England, with all its grievances, (its profuse administration, its venal statesmen, and heavy taxes) is far preferable, a far more eligible place of residence than France, where, in addition to all the accumulated evils that *we* experience, *they* are obliged to endure the curse (so intolerable to free minds!) of living under a *stratocracy* or *military* government. May Englishmen never experience such a terrible state of bondage! But, —if Englishmen can be such a set of poltroons as tamely to view their military forces augmented to an unreasonable degree, without being alarmed for their liberties, and without endeavouring to check the danger in the beginning, *then*, May they be properly recompensed for their dastardly conduct! May they experience the domination of the sword with all the aggravated severity, which the DUTCH are *said* to have suffered from those *good friends* who freed them from some Evils only to impose upon them greater. May their wives be

seduced, their daughters debauched, their wines consumed, and their purses emptied, without any power of redress for such injuries, except that of *garde et passe* with the gentlemen in scarlet.

The patriotic soldier, the man who—like *Cincinnatus*—quits the plough (or his ordinary occupation) to stand up in defence of his country, and, with other citizens, exposes himself to the perils of battle, must ever be entitled to our grateful regard: but when the hirelings—the men who fight for *constant* pay—become more numerous than is necessary to answer all the ends of *sound* policy, (i. e. to guard the Regal Person, and to preserve public tranquillity) they should ever be looked upon with a cautious eye.

Yet, to suppose that the instant a Man puts a red coat on his Back, and becomes a Soldier, he becomes an Enemy to Liberty, would be as illiberal as to suppose that every Alderman is an Epicure, or that every Attorney is a Rogue, and more deserving of a halter than the Felon whom he prosecutes. Therefore though the citizen may watch the soldier with a cautious eye, it should not be with too much suspicion, nor rancour at heart, lest excessive *jealousy* on the one part, should excite (as it commonly does) a spirit of *revenge* on the other, and the weapons which *should* be used only in the cause of freedom, be made subservient to the views of tyranny.

The drift of my argument is simply this, that, wherever the soldier, by profession, is held in *too high* estimation, the citizen must necessarily be depressed; whereas in every *good* government the former character is always subordinate to the latter. Impressed with this detestation of the *professional* military character, Dr. Johnson's remark appears to me with *great* force of thought, (though a little inaccurate,) that "the *most contemptible* of all human stations is that of a soldier in the "time of peace." *Idler*, No. 21.

With becoming reverence to the memory of this literary Colossus, I beg leave to state it as *my* opinion, that, there is *one* character *more* contemptible than this, which is,—A *young, healthy, officer, receiving half-pay, by choice, during the time of war.*

[P: 168]† If I were asked in what terms I would characterize those men who *take pleasure* in practising the arts of destroying their fellow-creatures, because it procures them a reputation for *bravery*, I should call them “a set of *legalized cut-throats*, decorated in scarlet and gold, and “other such ornamental vestures.”

Harsh as such language may appear, 'tis not less true than 'tis severe. It is the same horrid principle which influences the assassin on the highway, and the miscreant who delights in the slaughter of battle; only it has taken a different direction. But observe the proper distinction! Do not confound the real Hero, the virtuous protector of his country, with these sanguinary villains, these ruthless butchers of mankind, these *Buonapartes*, “whose argument is *blood*,” and who incite men to foul deeds of inhumanity, by premiums of “elegant *fabres* and double pay.” (*Newspaper intelligence.*) May perdition speedily overtake all such men, for they are the greatest enemies of the human race! Or, if they live long, may their lives be *miserable*; and, “for “*fear of dying, suffer worse than death!*” [*Armstrong on Preserving Health*]

But, while I reprobate these diabolical incendiaries, these prime agents of *Apollyon*, these emissaries from the Regent of Hell, it may seem inconsistent with the foregoing observations, for a person—letting blood-shed and war as I do—to recommend any conduct which may serve to cherish a fierce vindictive temper: but I have as

strong assurance as any theoretical problem can afford, that if, in *all* cases of battle, the *bloody* flag was to be held out, it would ultimately prove the flag of *mercy*.

If, when men engage in hostilities, they were to know that the only alternative is *death* or *triumph*,—that there is to be “no leading into captivity,” but that the Vanquished *must* die under the hands of the Victors,—this idea might indeed render them desperate in conflict, and probably they would fight with the furious intrepidity of an *Algierine* pirate; but it would have a good effect upon mankind in general: it would make them cautious of appealing to *artificial* Artillery as a mode of deciding their disputes, and they would make more use of the *Divine* Ordnance, so that with the *cannon* of reason, the *gunpowder* of rhetoric, and the *balls* of logic, they would batter down objections and difficulties, and make a way for reconciliation and atonement. WAR would *then*, never be resorted to but in such cases of aggression and provocation as admit of no other compensation than the extermination of the offenders; and, if man is to be considered as “a bundle of *passions*,” let every man of sense say which is most natural and laudable;—a daring spirit of *revenge* for injuries received, or a cool deliberate *system* of war, carried on to gratify Avarice and Ambition; for the sake of conquest and plunder; with the view of obtaining a few barrels of dollars, or acres of land!

If any body of people, relying upon their own military or maritime strength, should *frequently* manifest their hostile dispositions, in violation of the law of nations and of the rules of justice, *then*, the insults should not be resented merely by those people who are thereby aggrieved, but, every other nation should *confederate*, (not for the purpose of preserving what legislators have denominated the balance of *power*, which is only another

name for the balance of *misery*, or an ability to do as much mischief as another nation; but) to cut them off from the face of the earth, as a race of men who are adverse to *peace*, and therefore adverse to the best interests of mankind.

Detestable and shocking as this scheme of warfare may appear, to those whose judgments and opinions are influenced by the spirit of tenderness and compassion, yet it has some national advantages, which render it not unworthy the attention of the politician and the financier. By this mode of fighting, the whole force of a country may be directed against an enemy, either for offensive or defensive operations, either for annoyance or repulse; for, as there would be no PRISONERS to be guarded, of course there would be no necessity to have *almost* an army employed merely to keep the captives safe under confinement; hence, by diminishing the number of requisite forces, the army *estimates* would be considerably lessened; neither would there be any cause for expending large sums in preparing and supporting large *edifices* for the reception of *prisoners*, nor would there be any expence in maintaining them.

One strong objection here occurs to this plan; for, by superseding the necessity for so many useless soldiers, and, by annihilating WAR-PRISONERS, a great many profitable *places* must be abolished; consequently this scheme would tend to diminish the influence and patronage of the *crown*, and therefore it must not be adopted, because *ministers* would not then have so many opportunities to confer favours upon their friends and dependents.

Supposing, that the principle here proposed for the future regulation of *national* contests, should (for these reasons) be rejected, yet it might be adopted, with utility, in those which are *personal*, and perhaps it would operate more effectually than any prohibition against *Duelling*, if the legis-

lature was to decree that the combatants must continue fighting as long as *both* have ability to draw a trigger, and *one* of them *must die* on the field.

The survivor should be compelled to wear upon his hat, some badge significant of the praise he deserves for "*having killed his man.*" Making a difference between *Challenger* and *Challengee*. In the former case to wear a *red* cockade for life. In the latter, red mixed with white, and only to be worn for a certain term of years *.

But let me not enter upon such points as would lead the mind too far from the main subject.

In short, then, *seriously* considered, WAR, as a *system*, is an infernal employment: therefore let it be attended, if possible, with tenfold horrors, in order to excite tenfold abhorrence. If men must have *bellum*, let it be the *bellum funereum* or *internecinum*, the "*Dance of Death.*" Let nations enter into compact for this purpose! Or, if nations will not agree to it, let some *one* nation adopt this scheme of warfare! But it must not be a nation whose force is contemptible! It must be a people whose numbers and resources are such as to enable them to withstand the combined strength of other powerful European States. *Reason* immediately points out *Englishmen*, as the people who are thus circumstanced;—whose native valour and formidable Fleets, would enable them to carry terror to the very doors of all, who, by

* The author is really serious in the above suggestion. That duelling (as Mr. Wilberforce observes p. 142) is inconsistent with a vital principle of Christianity, he is ready to admit; and, as he thinks that None but Infidels would fight a deliberate morning-duel, he proposes this badge as a mark of infamy, not doubting that its ultimate efficacy to suppress the practice would be superior to a "*Court of Honour*," or any other mode that can be devised.

acts of wanton Outrage, may provoke their hostile resentment.

Thus might the Queen of the Isles become, if not absolute dictatress of peace to all the world, yet, a main instrument in suppressing the frequency and miseries of systematic war.

We have now a fair opportunity to make the experiment, and reduce plausible theory to the test of practice. We are threatened with INVASION and subjugation by an implacable domineering Foe. Let them attack us if they *dare*! but let them be first informed that not any of them, who, in such an attempt, may fall into our hands, shall ever return to France, but immediately be consigned to destruction*.

* *It is a circumstance not a little flattering to the author of these pages, to find that some of his ideas respecting taxation, salaries, &c. have actually been a topic of discussion in the senate, since his manuscript was put into the hands of the printer; and though they have, as yet, only been talked of, perhaps the same obstacles may not always exist which have now prevented them from assuming a more substantial form than that of words. As the public opinion in many places seems veering about, it augurs favourably as to this matter.*

If newspaper intelligence can be relied on, the propriety of part of what is recommended in this note, is sanctioned even by those political Sages—Messrs. Pitt and Company: for, in one of those vehicles of intelligence (Dec. 9th) was the following paragraph,

“We hear that government have resolved, in case the French should actually attempt an Invasion, to give them no quarters, but to sink their transports.”

As the author's sentiments are thus countenanced, as well by men who are in power as by those who are out, he may reasonably expect that his book will not meet with an unfavourable reception.

The many instances of daring actions performed by the *Gallic* soldiers during this war, afford sufficient proof that the *ordinary* dangers of such an enterprise would not deter them from rashly attempting it. However (as our Shakspeare observes) if "England be to herself but true," she has nothing to fear from their rash and furious intrepidity; and perhaps the ardor of their resolution might be damped, if they were convinced that their success depended entirely on their own *external* efforts: but, doubtless there are *some* persons in this country (besides emigrants and prisoners) who would hail them as invaders, with a hearty welcome; and render them every possible assistance. Yet, surely the great bulk of the people never will be such a set of dastardly scoundrels as to surrender their constitution, in exchange for any code of laws prescribed to them by *Frenchmen*. The English never can be such a nation of despicable wretches, so far to forget their national characteristic, as to value their lives *more* than their liberties. They never will consent that the glorious edifice of the British Constitution "which required the labour of many years to erect and finish, shall be made a heap of ruins in one day by the barbarity of an insolent enemy." [*Nugent's Travels through Germany.*]

The protection of *Madam Britannia* would be a much more noble cause for "10,000 swords to fly from their scabbards", [Burke] than in behalf of any *reginal* prostitute.

Let Frenchmen be taught that Englishmen never will submit to such degradation of their honour as to see the French banners triumphantly displayed, *by* Frenchmen in England. And let them understand, in plain terms, that the issue of their attempt must be—Victory, Flight, or Death!

Thus let the conclusion of a war (entered into I think *justly* by the *British*, but procrastinated by *system*) be the introduction of a new mode of fighting. Let Britons immediately resolve to adopt it, and rigidly keep to it for the space of only fifty years; and I make no doubt, that, by that time, it will appear of such evident utility, as to be *universally* adopted, and will be the happy prelude to the completion of that glorious prophecy when the temple of JANUS shall be once more and finally shut; OR, WHEN UNIVERSAL Peace, and—by consequence—UNIVERSAL *Righteousness*,
SHALL COVER THE EARTH.

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